

Virginia Wildlife

JULY 1981

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Dedicated to the Conservation of Virginia's Wildlife and Related Natural Resources

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Brook trout by Judy Moos Welton, Upper Marlboro, Maryland

Letters

Editorial

MORE ON MUZZLELOADERS

In regard to "Unfair Season" (March 1981 *Virginia Wildlife*, "Letters"), it is unfair, but only to every sportsman who hunts with a modern rifle. I have hunted for 60 years with all kinds of guns. The muzzleloader has the killing power and accuracy to kill deer at ranges where 80 percent of all deer are killed, 40 to 70 yards, and will do the job just as well as the high-powered modern rifles. It seems to me that these muzzleloaders want the forests all to themselves during prime weather conditions and when deer are as tame as house cats.

Last fall during the October squirrel season, [there were several occasions upon which I could have] killed bucks that walked to within 50 feet of me, with #5 shot in the old 12-gauge.

The average sportsman cannot afford the \$400 it takes to buy a primitive weapon, and if he did, these special interest groups would lose all interest in hunting.

It is about time that the Game Commission stopped catering to special interest groups and started leaning toward the average sportsman and conservationist.

Harry S. Doyle
Greenville

GROWING UP OUTDOORS

I hate to do it, but in the interest of nature education, please accept a benevolent criticism concerning the "Growing Up Outdoors" column in the January 1981 issue. The author stated that "The woodchuck hibernates in winter; it is the only animal in Virginia that does." I suggest that the term "mammal" be substituted for "animal." Then, just to make things perfect, add several names to the list of hibernating mammals. The list should include the non-migrating members of the evening bat family (*Vespertilionidae*), and two species of the jumping mice (*Zapodidae*). By the way, I'll still buy the magazine.

Greg Zell
Arlington

Certainly, you are correct. However, rather than cover all the technical bases in "Growing Up Outdoors," I prefer to treat the column as a springboard. I try to give my readers (most of whom are quite young) the bare essentials so that they—perhaps with the help of a teacher, parent, or other friend—might dig deeper, as deep as their interest, age and intelligence will allow, into the world of wildlife. (Still, I should not have used the word "only" in referring to the woodchuck as a hibernating animal). I am glad we didn't lose a reader over it!

—Assistant Editor

CORRECTION

In the May and June issues, we incorrectly identified *Virginia Wildlife's* volume number as 62. The volume number is actually 42, as this issue's masthead shows.

SOCIOLOGY OF HUNTING

To the Editor, *Virginia Wildlife*:

In his analysis of anti-hunting groups, Alan Krug ("Sociology of Hunting," February 1981) has used the same type of sweeping generalization that the "anti's" have been accused of applying to hunters. He has ignored the more serious, rational questions raised by some groups. Hunting in this country persists primarily because wildlife management programs exist to provide a sustained yield for game species.

A case in point is Michigan's Deer Habitat Improvement Program, whose goal was to double the state's deer herd in ten years. A published analysis of the social costs of this program revealed that achieving the goal would add a cost of \$2.4 million in motor vehicle-deer accidents [as well as costs resulting from] increased hunter accidents and crop damage. While Mr. Krug argues that overpopulation is regulated by hunters, it is curious that hunter demand for deer was [basically] the cause [of overpopulation]. . . .

Wildlife management agencies point out that 1) hunters provide funds for such programs, and 2) habitat manipulation benefits not only the "target species," but other wildlife species dependent on the same habitat. However true, this is a simplistic and shortsighted view. . . both the non-hunting public and wildlife pay, when land is acquired and habitat changed for game management purposes. Setting back the successional stages of woodlands destroys plant and animal communities of mature forests, and robs the "non-consumptive" user of those benefits derived from such unmanipulated habitats.

The so-called benefits derived from hunting cannot be debated because they are so personal, but it behooves the wildlife manager to realize that what they perceive as anti-hunting sentiment is not necessarily an emotional reaction, but a serious questioning of the biological and economic appropriateness of "sound" wildlife management as it is practiced today.

Natasha Atkins, Wildlife Biologist, The Humane Society

Dear Ms. Atkins:

Without hunting, deer would pose an unbelievable problem because they have no serious predators, save man. While it is true that game management helped hasten the day when this condition existed, given seed stock and current land use patterns, a bountiful deer herd was inevitable. Without management by controlled hunting, chaos would reign, with landowners forced to slaughter deer by the thousands to protect crops, or the animal welfare groups' "government hunters" being brought into play. Our deer problem began when we shot the last wolf and mountain lion and cleared the forests. Only illegal hunting kept the problem from developing sooner, and I do not believe that anyone wants to advocate illegal hunting.

Wildlife management is much more than administering public hunting areas to produce a crop of game for the hunter. It is a philosophy of making a place for wildlife in all human endeavors, be it a backyard habitat plan or a National Forest. Were it not for the hunter's interest in producing wildlife for hunting, it is doubtful that public and private forest management or farm management would have made any provisions for wildlife until quite recently. Non-game wildlife was not held in very high esteem until 10 or 15 years ago. It is doubtful that wildlife habitat would have been included in these programs if hunting were not involved. Hunters were actually saving marshlands for ducks in the face of development long before environmentalists realized all their other ecological values.

Regardless of your opinion of hunting, those who love wildlife owe a debt of gratitude to hunters for what they have done and are doing.

In 1982, Virginia taxpayers will have the opportunity to designate a portion of their state tax refund to be used for management of non-game wildlife. It would be my bet that hunters will be the majority of those who contribute.

Harry Gillam
Editor, *Virginia Wildlife*



I flicked a short chunk of nightcrawler into the current on the far side of the fast pool, but didn't expect anything to happen because the small mountainside creek was too high, too fast and too muddy following a weekend of heavy rains. All conditions were "wrong" but the 10½-inch brook trout had not been told he wasn't supposed to eat. The surprise jerk almost caused me to lose my balance on the side of a large, damp mossy rock and meet him eye-to-eye in three or four feet of water.

I managed to get him into some leaves behind the rock, used a dry cloth for a non-slip grip, removed the hook from his lip with an old pair of longnosed pliers and for a few minutes simply admired one of nature's gifts to the Virginia mountainside. The mountain trout's vivid white edges on lower fins set him apart from his imported relatives; the orange belly that turns to bright red in breeding season, the sides speckled with red spots surrounded by blue circles, made him a beauty and the best I have caught to date. The next five I caught seemed like minnows in comparison.

During my growing-up days in Clifton Forge, my neighborhood buddies and I would leave our beds well before dawn and, armed with matches and cold biscuits, set out for the streams; these trips took place many years before stocking programs brought hatchery fish to the creeks. We put lines, hooks and bait in our pockets and walked some five miles to Smith Creek in and above McGraw's Gap at the foot of Warm Springs Mountain north of our small city.

Usually successful, we speared our catches on green

sticks, cooked them over a fire, and enjoyed our prizes with biscuits and pure creek water; we would take some of our catch home to feed our families at Depression tables.

Twenty years of military service and some post-retirement civilian jobs kept me from fishing the small trout streams again until a few years ago. Then, a magazine article about angling for mountain trout urged me to make a few trips to the mountainside, with varying levels of success. I developed a growing love for catching brookies and talked with some self-elected experts whose varied advice about times of the day, phases of the moon, best types of weather and infallible bait left me confused. I use the easier method of simply going when time permits, sticking to short sections of nightcrawlers for bait, and approaching the waters directly instead of deviously. Most days, I get my limit of six, but even when I am not as successful, the day gives me pleasure.

I have modernized my methods and equipment to some degree over those I used some 45 years ago. I get to the streams in about 15 minutes in a pickup instead of by foot, the jerk poles of youth have given way to a telescoping rod that is reduced to about 15 inches when going through brush, I wear the lower portions of some old hip boots instead of wading barefoot, and now I take *all* the trout home for others to enjoy with me.

The brook, or mountain or native trout, is the only cold water fish which is truly a native in our mountain streams. He feeds almost entirely on water insects and

No Easy Target

The wily brook trout is worth the trouble it takes to catch him.

by Edward J. Harris

other creek critters (and some nightcrawler bits), and needs a constant supply of cold, clear, well-aerated water below 65 degrees, because he can seldom survive higher temperatures for extended periods. One of my best fishing days was in mid-December when creeks were bordered with ice extending about eight inches from the banks.

The person who goes after brook trout for the first time must be ready for physical effort, because most small mountainside streams are well-protected on both sides by brush, trees, deadfalls and rocks, and usually move down difficult rocky slopes. He can locate any number of national forest creeks that average three to five feet in width, complete with falls, pools and fast riffles; if he wishes, he can follow them down to the larger streams for a bit easier (but not much) fishing.

The brook trout will learn that this wily fish is no easy target and doesn't like many unnatural sounds in his environment, so the angler must practice some restraint, moving as quietly as possible and having considerable patience. He will find this discipline profitable, even if the fish won't bite, because troubles seem to float away on the waters and relaxation overtakes him. He can do some daydreaming, but will snap to immediate consciousness when even the smallest native trout grabs the bait and produces a thrill that must be experienced to be understood.

When hunting activities are stilled, the mountainsides are chock full of solitude. The largest "crowd" I have met in all my trips to the creeks was made up of three forest service

workers who were cleaning drains and smoothing a well-maintained mountainside road. And one afternoon, two game wardens stopped to check me out. On each of two other trips I saw only one other fisherman: my partner. In contrast, there were 84 vehicles in McGraw's Gap one recent opening day well before noon, and it appeared that each of them was within spitting distance of the anglers who lined the creek banks and perched on mid-stream rocks.

The fisherman who tries for mountain trout can experience some fringe benefits, if he takes the time to look and listen. There are tunes and voices where a creek speeds over, around, and under rocks. From beside a quiet stretch of water he will find the "silent woods" are not soundless: breezes flow in brush and trees, dry leaves twist loose and glance off limbs, tall slender trees rub each other in friendly fashion, and there are small invisible feet to be heard speeding through dry leaves, or a woodpecker's forest echo.

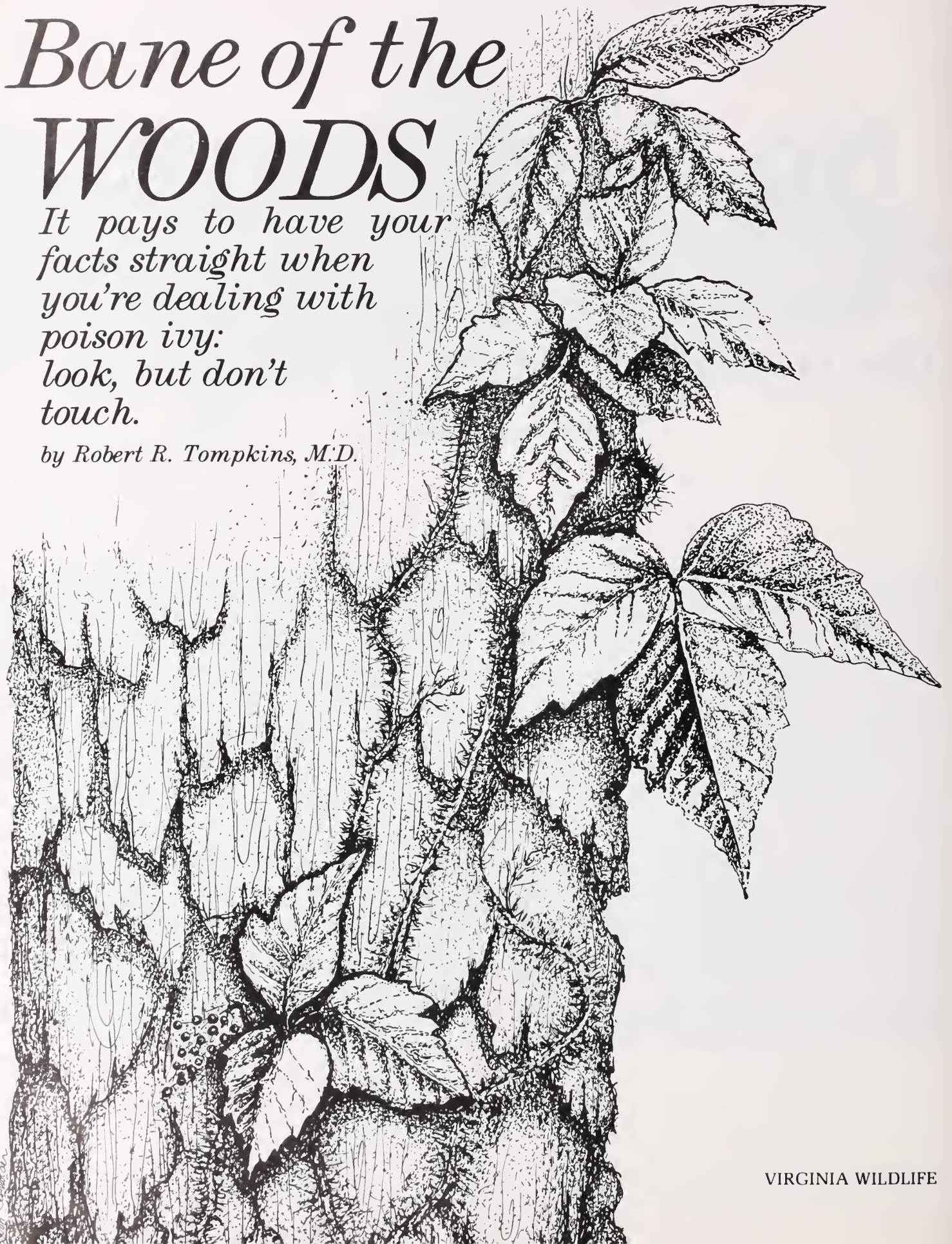
Many things contribute to make trout fishing the enjoyable pastime it is, but all of the efforts of a trout fisherman lead to one goal: eating the fish. Every angler probably has his own favorite recipe. I dry the fish with paper towels, coat them with a thick seasoned batter of eggs and cornflake crumbs, and fry them quickly in a deep layer of vegetable oil. Or, you can simply fry them in butter or margarine. I like to eat hush puppies, french fries and salad with fried trout.

But no matter how you like it, trout are targets worth pursuing. □

Bane of the **WOODS**

*It pays to have your
facts straight when
you're dealing with
poison ivy:
look, but don't
touch.*

by Robert R. Tompkins, M.D.



More people develop allergic contact dermatitis from poison ivy, poison oak, and poison sumac than from all other substances combined. Moreover, probably no other "contactant" has had more written about it. Yet, surprisingly, misconceptions about poison ivy still prevail—even among physicians. Here are six very common ones.

Some people are immune to poison ivy, while others break out just by looking at it. The fact is that under appropriate conditions, nearly anyone can be sensitized to poison ivy. There is no question, however, that immunity varies markedly from one person to another, and even in the same person at different times. Some people are highly sensitive and others are weakly sensitive, but probably no one is 100 percent immune.

The severity of poison ivy dermatitis depends on a person's innate sensitivity to the *Rhus* plant, and on the quantity and duration of his contact with the allergen-containing oil. Rubbing freshly crushed leaves vigorously on the skin produces a dermatitis even in so-called "immune" persons. Immune persons have probably just not been exposed under the right conditions. The irritating material of the plant is distributed through a canal system in the root, stems, leaves, and fruit; and contact with the plant will not cause dermatitis if the leaves or fruit are not bruised.

Direct contact with the plant is always necessary to produce dermatitis. This is not so. Being near or looking at poison ivy without some direct contact can produce a dermatitis. When people break out without touching the plant directly, what they do not realize is that they have touched something that had been in contact with the plant. Contact with smoke from burning plants can also cause an eruption.

The allergen can be, and often is, transmitted by contaminated clothing, shoes, fingers, and domestic animals. After being unknowingly carried into the house, it remains active for a prolonged period. This explains why a patient may continue to develop more rashes without leaving the house. Laundering in a washing machine removes the contamination from clothing.

Poison ivy dermatitis is contagious and can be transmitted by blister fluid when vesicles rupture. This is simply not true, since the fluid does not contain the antigen. Yet, when I was recently asked to examine a patient hospitalized with severe and extensive poison ivy dermatitis, I found that he had been placed in the isolation ward.

After exposure, dermatitis can be prevented or aborted by washing with soap and water. Actually, there is some truth in this, but the irritant rapidly penetrates and becomes fixed to the skin. Thorough washing within five to 10 minutes after exposure can abort an outbreak in some people, but not in those who are highly sensitive.

A study in which bruised leaves were applied to the forearms of highly sensitive and less sensitive people confirmed this. Washing within 30 minutes after exposure helped in some of the less sensitive people. Washing within one hour of exposure, however, was totally useless in preventing dermatitis in anyone.

You can't get poison ivy dermatitis in the winter. Yes, you can. True, the peak incidence occurs in the spring when the leaves are young, soft, and easily bruised. But contact with the plant's roots can cause dermatitis even in winter. This happens most often around Christmas in tree nursery employees and those who dig up their own trees. Fall's yellow leaves still have an antigenic property, but they are tougher and harder to injure than they were earlier in the season. Once they wither and fall, the leaves are much less antigenic.

Antigenic therapy helps in acute poison ivy dermatitis. On the contrary; in fact, it may do harm. In the early 1900's, injecting poison ivy oleoresin was a popular therapy for acute dermatitis. Unfortunately, some physicians continue to use this treatment despite studies proving it not only worthless, but highly hazardous. Injecting the oleoresin during an acute breakout can produce an explosive generalized dermatitis with fever and other problems.

American Indians were known to chew poison ivy leaves in an effort to develop immunity, and apparently some of them got away with it; but you might not be so lucky! □

Identification and Prevention

In order to avoid poison ivy, you must be able to identify it. Many people—even those who spend a great deal of time in the woods—have no idea what it looks like.

Poison ivy thrives in sun and light shade. It usually grows as a trailing vine with many kinky brown footlets slightly thickened at the tips, but it may grow erect as a bush to 10 feet or more.

The compound leaves are formed of three leaflets. The middle leaflet grows on a longer stalk than those on the sides. The leaves may be ragged in outline with coarse notches on a whole leaflet, or entire with smoothly curving margins from base to tip. The foliage varies in size, shape, color, and luster depending on its location and the season. In shade, the leaves tend

to be thin, broad, and dull. In extreme shade, they tend to be narrow and very thin. In full sun, the leaves are thick and glossy, although along a dusty roadside, glossy leaves appear dull. In early spring, the leaves are purplish. In fall, they turn yellow, red, and orange. Poison ivy blossoms are greenish-white; the berries are white.

If you can't avoid the plants themselves, you can still avoid breaking out. Before going out, make a lather of yellow laundry soap and water and completely cover the exposed areas of your skin. Later, as you bathe, the irritating oil of the plant will be washed away with the soap. Besides laundering your clothing after an outing, clean your shoes with leather soap, then dry and polish them. If your pet has been exposed, be sure it has been bathed before you pet it. □

by John Traister

*Summertime is prime time
for sudden and dangerous
electrical storms, and outdoor
enthusiasts should know where to
take cover
—the right kind of cover—
at a moment's notice.*

Stormy Weather

Each year during warm weather, campers and others who take to the outdoors are faced with the possibility of encountering an electrical storm. The lightning that accompanies these storms is undoubtedly the most feared weather phenomenon among outdoorsmen. However, the destructive action of most lightning discharges can be effectively prevented by following a few simple precautions.

Lightning is the discharge of enormous charges of static electricity accumulated in clouds. These charges are formed by the air currents striking the face of the clouds and causing condensation of the moisture in them. When the wind strikes the cloud, these small particles of moisture are blown upward, carrying negative charges to the top of the cloud and leaving the bottom with positive charges. As very heavy rains or other forms of heavy condensation fall through a part of the cloud, one side of the cloud becomes charged positively and the other side negatively with millions of volts' difference in potential.

When clouds, under the condition just described, come near enough to the ground or to another cloud with opposite charges, they will discharge to the ground or to another cloud with explosive violence that all of us have seen.

Actually, campers snug in their cars or RV's are just about as safe as possible in an electrical storm. Even if lightning should discharge directly onto a recreation vehicle, the low resistance of the metal shell will enable the discharge to find its way to ground, usually with little damage to the vehicle. Fiberglass shells are good insulators and seldom will occupants inside the vehicle feel any shock from static electricity in the air.

On the other hand, when campers are away from their RV's—hiking, boating on a nearby lake or river, or fishing a mountain stream—certain precautions should be taken to insure their safety. Since heavy rains accompany most electrical storms, those caught out in the weather will seek shelter from the rain, usually under a cluster of trees. This is exactly where you should not be! There is a strong tendency

for lightning discharges to strike the highest object in an area, and a cluster of trees in an otherwise vacant field is an ideal spot for lightning to strike.

If you are caught in an electrical storm in an open field, the safest thing to do is to lie down flat, away from all elevated objects. However, if it's raining and you don't have a poncho or other covering, this is going to be rather uncomfortable, so look for nearby woods, one with trees of approximately the same height. A cluster of smooth-barked white pines is ideal. Find a comfortable spot under the lowest trees and wait out the storm.

When caught out in a canoe or boat, head for shore immediately, find a spot away from the highest trees in the area, and use the boat as a shelter by turning it upside down and getting under it.

Tent campers should find an area away from the highest trees, especially a small cluster of trees in an open field. This may seem like the ideal spot to camp, but it is also the most dangerous in an electrical storm. Find a group of evergreens with relatively smooth bark and use this area for your campsite.

Besides the possibility of electrocution, the camper will also have to be aware of other destructive work of lightning. You can be sure that the forces of lightning are unbelievable. I have witnessed a huge limb (about 10 inches in diameter where it was attached to the trunk) being blown off the trunk of a black walnut tree and fall some 30 feet to the ground. A tent erected directly under this limb would have met with disaster.

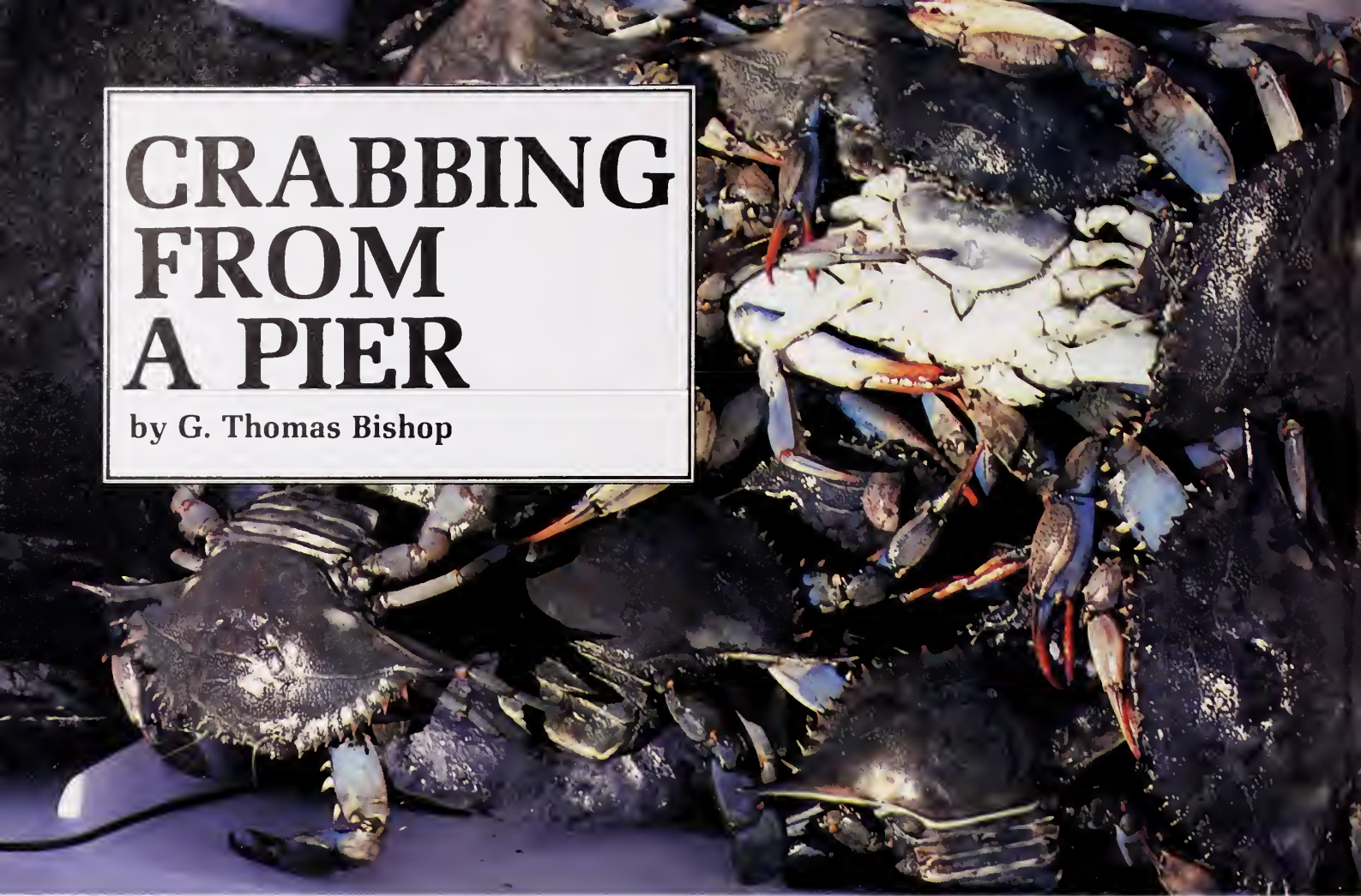
Falling limbs from lightning and the high winds that accompany a storm can knock down electrical power lines, damage RV's, and injure people, so again use good judgement when selecting a campsite.

Lightning can be dangerous, to be sure, but a few simple precautions will keep you safer in an electrical storm than you would be driving on a highway or crossing a street in a busy city. □



CRABBING FROM A PIER

by G. Thomas Bishop



For many Chesapeake Bay watermen, the Atlantic blue crab (*Callinectes sapidus*) is the basis for a hefty share of their income. Millions of pounds of the luscious white meat of soft or hard shell crabs are packed and sent to restaurants and seafood dealers all over the nation.

The average fisherman, however, usually doesn't have the time to lay trotlines, run dredges or scrapes, and use large crab pots as do the men for whom the Bay is a livelihood.

Still, if you want to get a taste of a fresh blue crab, there's a way you can reap some of the Bay's bounty.

Crabbing from a pier, using collapsible crab cages, is easy and a fun way to spend some of your leisure time.

There are many Virginia piers suitable for a weekend of good crabbing. For \$2.00 you can get an all-day fishing permit (\$1.00 for those under 12). Bait, tackle and some equipment are sold at most piers. Each pier also has a refreshment stand.

There are two piers in Hampton, three piers at Ocean View in Norfolk, the Sea Gull pier at Bay Bridge Tunnel, The Lynhaven Pier, the Virginia Beach pier and the Little Island Park Pier at Sandbridge.

Crabbing from a pier is as simple as pulling wet clothes from a washer. You throw a crab cage into the water, wait a few minutes, pull it up, then there might be one, two or three crabs inside to dump in your cooler.

While waiting for crabs to go for the bait, casting a few fishing lines may bring in some flounders, grey trout and others.

CHECKLIST

1. Cubical collapsible crab cages about one foot square.
2. Bait, such as chicken necks, breasts or fish heads. Or try some bite-sized chunks of salted eel, as some Bay watermen do.
3. Heavy duty string or thin rope for securing the cage to the pier. Also some nylon string or wire for tying the bait to the bottom of the cage.
4. Fishing equipment is optional but it will add to your fun and break the monotony of lifting crab cages.
5. Coolers for storing the crab and to hold refreshments.
6. If you intend to use more than two crab cages, using a child's wagon to carry equipment is extremely useful. It's frustrating to have your hands full, then drop something every few yards.
7. Suntan lotion.

Once on the pier, find a comfortable spot. The best places for crabbing are generally from the middle of the pier out. There are usually wooden benches along both sides of the pier, but take a few lawn chairs if you want to be more comfortable. Some piers have a shaded area under a wooden canopy, for those who may find the sun too strong.

After unloading your gear, make sure the collapsible traps are assembled correctly. Tie your bait to the bottom panel using nylon string or wire. Make sure the bait is relatively fresh, since blue crabs have good eyesight for crustaceans and will avoid eating rotted or unsightly bait.

Using a thin rope or heavy duty string, tie one end to the pier railing. Make sure it is secured to both the cage and railing. Then throw the cage into the water (which may have a depth of 10, 15 or 20 feet) leaving some slack, but not too much.

Pull up the cage every few minutes. If there's a crab or two in there, bring the pot to the cooler or basket and let one side panel open, and shake the cage so that the crab goes in.

If, however, the crab escapes and drops to the floor of the pier, you must be a little cautious trying to catch it out of the water. It has formidable claws that can give you a painful pinch.

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I still follow the example of a young girl, not more than five years old, who would pull the cages from the water to check for any success. Sighting a crab, she would shout to her Daddy, who was fishing about 20 yards down the pier. Since she was unable to lift the cage over the pier's railing, her Dad did this. He would shake the crab from the cage so that it landed on the floor of the pier. The little girl got behind the crab quickly, and put her right foot firmly down on its back. She skillfully moved a hand to each side to grasp the crab's swimming fins close to its body. She quickly held it up, all the while cautiously eyeing the claws. With a smile, she took the crab to her Daddy's basket. This routine continued for hours.

At the end of your crabbing "session," you might have anywhere from 20 to 100 crabs. Be sure that you haven't kept any crabs smaller than four and three-fourths inches across the shell from tip to tip of the longest spikes. For more information about the state laws and regulations on crabbing, write to the Virginia Marine Resources Commission, Post Office Box 756, 2401 West Avenue, Newport News, Virginia 23607.

Most piers are within a two- or three-hour drive of most Virginia counties and cities. Before putting the crabs in your car or trailer, water down the basket or cooler of crabs. If the drive home is longer than two hours, put some cracked ice over them. This will prolong their survival until they reach the cooking pot.

Now for the best part: steaming and eating the crabs.

Rinse the crabs lightly by watering them while in the basket or cooler. You can use a garden hose or tub faucet.

It is advisable to cook only the live crabs and dispose of those which didn't survive the trip home. Bacteria multiplies quickly in dead shellfish. You must cook hard shell crabs before picking the meat. For steaming crabs, the pot should have a raised rack two inches high. This can be covered with aluminum foil. Add equal quantities of vinegar and water (beer is often used in place of some of the water) to just below the level of the rack. Layer the crabs and sprinkle each layer with a mixture of salt and seasoning. You can make your own seasoning from cookbook instructions or use commercially-prepared seasoning. Cover and steam for about 20 minutes, and eat them hot.

To remove the meat from a crab, take one and lay it on its back. Lift its "apron" break it off and discard. Turn it over, pry off the top shell. You can save the shells if you intend to make deviled crabs, so you can put the meat on it and serve it. Scrape off the inedible gills. A knife or fingers will do the job. Use a plastic trash bag for discarded materials. Break off the mouth and eye area and discard, along with the other internal parts like the fat, heart and eggs. Some find the latter of these edible, even a delicacy, but it's a matter of personal taste. Break off all legs, swimming fins and claws. Hold the crab body, break it in half. Pick the meat with your fingers or a nut pick. You can eat while you pick or put it aside and save enough to prepare such a dish as crab cakes or deviled crab. Claw meat can be removed by using a nutcracker. The meat can be dipped in a buttery seasoned dish or bowl if you like.

Since the cooked meat is perishable, it should either be eaten immediately or soon after it is cooked. If properly wrapped, it will keep for a few months in a freezer, but only a few days at most under refrigeration. Check a reference book before attempting to freeze the meat.

Whether it's a tasty steamed crab, a deviled or stuffed crab, eating the delicious white meat is part of the enjoyable experience of crabbing—from a pier. □



Anticipation



The promise of ripe summer fruits—berries, wild grapes, apples and more—is a mouth-watering prospect

by Bill Thomas

Spike Knuth



Dennis Dale



Mel White



Spike Knuth



Spike Knuth

To some of my suburban neighbors a wild fleshy fruit is something to be avoided. If the briars and brambles don't rip your clothes, then the berries will stain them. To most of us, though, the promise of wild summer fruits is cause for mouth-watering anticipation. We can't wait for the wild strawberry to ripen in early June, or orange mushy persimmons to fall in late September. The ripening seasons of ten other wild fruits overlap in a blur of dates: raspberries in June and July; blackberries in July and August; wild apples in July, August and September.

Wild fruits ripen throughout the state at varying times; those in the mountain areas are most unpredictable. I have seen persimmons ripen before paw paws in the Massanutten and Blue Ridge Mountains, and do just the opposite in the Coastal Plains and Piedmont. I have picked dried elderberries in November near Star Chapel in Bath County, but have not seen them on the bush after September in northern Virginia. These same berries ripen as early as mid-July in Page County in the Shenandoah Valley, but are ready until late July and August in Fairfax County.

Summer begins officially on June 22, but my summer begins when I see the red, drooping clusters of wild strawberries in early June. Walking through fields in May, I usually spot the white flowers of this hardy plant and mark the spot in my mind. Almost any field will do, although I usually find most along borders of large fields or areas where partial shade is present. They are easy to recognize: their leaves are almost identical to the cultivated variety. By the beginning of June, they are ripe enough to enjoy. Most of the time I eat too many and take only a few home.

Dedicated outdoorsmen are the only people who will ever enjoy the fruits of the Juneberry, also known as the shadbush or serviceberry. When this small tree is bearing fruit in mid-June, it is often hidden from sight by the forest around it. The only way to spot it is to drive along back roads in April and look for the first white blooms to appear on the trees. The flowers have long, narrow, white petals arriving before the leaves. By June, heart-shaped, toothed leaves, broader than those of the wild cherry, have matured and the reddish-purple fruit is ripening. By mid-June, the sweet fruit will be ready to pick. Wild strawberries, juneberries, and red raspberries are the first three fruits to appear in summer and are my favorites all year.



Wineberries make a tasty wine but I prefer red raspberries when I find them. Raspberries are not as abundant as blackberries, but are easy to spot. The leaves are wider than the blackberries' and the stems are hairy. The fruit seems to hide in a covering of leaf-like structures until ripe, then a succulent red cluster of tiny fruit appears. The berry is actually dozens of small berries joined together. Don't try them until they are easy to pick and leave a core behind. Raspberries grow only in open areas in rich, moist forests. I have found them along stream valleys in a city park, a large United States Army Reserve, county parks, the banks of the Shenandoah and Potomac Rivers and various areas in Virginia mountains.

The quality of the wild fruits cannot get any better as summer progresses, but the quantity increases considerably. Blackberries are at their peak in July and August and can be found everywhere. It seems that every square mile in northern Virginia has a blackberry bush on it. During blackberry season, I am always prepared with a plastic bag in my pockets when I take a walk in the woods. After I have eaten several handfuls, I take the rest home for my family to sample or bake in a pie.

July also is the month when blueberries and huckleberries begin to ripen. These small shrubs grow well in recently-burned areas and margins of woods. I have searched some areas year after year without finding berries on the bushes although other bushes seem to bear fruit every year. The ripe berries are much smaller than those in the grocery store, but are just as tasty. To pick enough for a pie or cake takes several hands working several hours, but it is worth the trouble.

Abandoned home sites and old farms are easy to find in Virginia. Every time I find one I also find wild fruit trees nearby. A local park with an old orchard is a good place to pick fruit. Wild pear and apple trees are just two of many plants in Virginia that escaped cultivation. Wild apples vary from cooking to eating varieties and all have their uses. Pears appear from July to August and apples have an even longer season. Some make your mouth pucker while others seem to stay as hard as rocks, but eventually they will be nice and juicy. Every year, my wife and I put up several quarts of applesauce and make a few apple pies.

Scarecrows in cherry trees might look silly, but they keep the birds away. I used to guard the cherry tree in my backyard as diligently as a soldier on guard duty. It was worth it because the big red cherries were tasty and made great pies. We hiked to the woods and picked chokecherries, and my mother made good pies from these, too. I have tried eating wild black cherries over the years and until this year, always found them too tart. But I finally tasted a few that I found almost as good as those in my backyard. Different amounts of rain and sunlight affect wild cherry trees considerably. If you do not like them right from the tree, try a pie or jelly.

Peanut butter and elderberry jelly sandwiches are my staple for lunch throughout the year. In August, when the big drooping clusters of elderberries ripen, we make a few dozen pints of elderberry jelly. Some people like to nibble on the tiny fruits where they grow in the fields and roadsides, but I prefer saving them all for jelly or wine. In late May or early June, large, flat, white clusters of flowers appear above the compound-leaved shrub. These flowers are easy to spot compared to the berries in summer that are hidden by the surrounding foliage. Once you find the berries, cut the clusters with pruning shears and let them fall into a bag. I take these and rub them on chicken wire placed over a pot to separate them from the stems. Next, I cover these with water and boil the cleaned berries for twenty minutes, add an equal amount of rhusade (made from red sumac heads) and proceed to make my favorite jelly.

An elusive summer fruit for me has been wild grapes. Wild grape vines are found in most wooded areas but only a small number of them yield edible grapes. Most with edible fruit are growing high and out of reach. Those I can reach vary in their tartness or sweetness. I have made a small quantity of jelly and tasted a delicious wine from wild grapes so I have not given up on them yet.

Paw paws and persimmons finish off the summer season in our area. Both of these large fleshy fruits grow wild in wet areas or near old farms. Down in the paw paw patch along a stream or river, many of the paw paw trees will be barren but a few will bear the cucumber-shaped fruits. Although the succulent paw paws are ripe in August or September, the persimmons usually do not ripen until October. These delicious orange plum-like fruits are not ripe until they are mushy. I pick them to prepare for later use in pies or cakes. They have several big seeds which I separate from the fruit in a food mill before drying the pulp in an oven or canning it. I enjoy a persimmon cake as late as Christmas or Easter.

With so many wild fruits to choose from, every Virginian can find one to call his favorite. □

by Charlie Dickey

The Rent Can Wait



Hobart Sosebee, my neighbor and outdoor buddy, isn't exactly irresponsible about money. He just doesn't know how to handle it, unless you count handing it out.

Hobart looks at things differently from most people. For instance, it is typical of Hobart to buy a new shotgun on payday and not have enough money left for luxuries such as rent, food and water. The path to Hobart's door is a network of runways trampled by utility people turning off meters and dunning agents trying to squeeze a turnip.

His wife, Flora, thought that since he already had 14 or 15 shotguns, it was more important to pay the rent. But Hobart's line of logic was that the shotgun was on sale, guns are increasing in value and are a hedge against inflation. Besides, Hobart didn't own a pump with modified choke.

Things have gone on a long time like that between Hobart and Flora. He once bought out all of the reloading equipment of a sporting goods store going out of business. He bought enough wads and shots to support a fair-sized army but all of the hulls were 28 gauge and he didn't own a 28-gauge shotgun. Technicalities don't bother Hobart. The next payday he bought a Remington 1100 in 28 gauge and almost got evicted for non-payment of rent.

Flora finally went to see his boss and made arrangements to have his paycheck mailed directly to her. Hobart was considerably upset about that and you could hear them shouting at each other up and down the street. Flora kept saying that if he needed pocket change he could reload some 28-gauge shells and peddle them.

After Hobart's purchasing power was severely cut, the Sosebees began to catch up with the bills and even got a little ahead. Flora called me over one day and said, "Hobart needs a new suit. If he were to kick off, he doesn't even have a decent one to be laid out in. I don't want to embarrass him by taking him shopping. So I'm giving you this \$150 to take him down town and get him a suit. Just don't let him get his hands on the money."

Well, Flora sure squeezed me in the middle. It was worse than two bird-dog owners asking me who had the best dog. Hobart said it was indecent of Flora not to trust him to buy a suit. When he found out I had \$150, he brightened up and said, "We can get a good suit for \$50. That'll leave us \$100 to stop by Easy Joe's and pick up a secondhand rifle or maybe a scope."

"Hobart," I said, "how long has it been since you

bought a suit? Fifty bucks will hardly get you one leg to a pair of britches."

On the way to town, Hobart casually mentioned that the Talbott house was having a sale of all furnishings. Old man Talbott had been a traveler and sportsman in his day. Before I knew what was happening we were at the auction.

Hobart went rummaging around and checking the items still up for sale. He came back all excited to where I was sitting and said he had found an original Audubon painting. I told him that it didn't matter what he had found. He didn't have the money to bid on it.

He replied, "We can make a killing on that painting. It's worth thousands if nobody here knows it's an original."

He finally talked me into going back to look at the painting. It was part of a huge clutter. A section of the frame had been broken and it looked as though the painting had hung over a fireplace. Hobart said, "We can get it cleaned up by an art student for next to nothing."

He slyly pointed to the artist's signature when no one was looking and said, "Now don't act excited like you've found something valuable." I peered at the signature and read, "John James Au. . . ." The last letters were smudged over.

"Hobart," I said, "that dirty old painting don't look like any of Audubon's stuff I've ever seen. The turkeys look too natural and ain't straining their necks."

"You never did know anything about art," Hobart said. "It's the real thing. It's been hiding up here in this old mansion for no telling how long."

Anyway, Hobart talked me into letting him bid some of his suit money. I told him he could spend any amount up to \$50. When the painting came up, Hobart bid \$50 before the auctioneer even got started.

No one else said a word and Hobart bought himself a painting.

I was trying to get him out of there but the auctioneer brought out some hand-painted decoys. Hobart said to me in a loud whisper, "We just made several thousand dollars. How about letting me use a little more of that suit money?"

Well, there were some old ladies that wanted the decoys to make lamps out of and Hobart had to bid \$100 to get four of them. Then he hit me up for an advance on his Audubon painting profit and bought a dozen 1920 calendars, some rat-chewed outdoor books, a U.S. Army canteen from World War I and a pair of puttees for walking through wetlands.

He drained off every cent I had buying old lanterns, kitchen knives, a rusty bayonet and all sorts of things with hidden values that only Hobart could see. He kept telling me we'd make a fortune reselling the items to collectors.

On the way out, we ran into the art teacher from the local high school. He looked at Hobart's prize painting and said, "Oh, you bought the John James Aubraken turkey painting. Crazy old coot used to live around here. The painting is worthless but the broken frame might bring a few dollars."

Well, I'm on Flora's list now, right up at the top with Hobart. She's told it all over town that I don't have enough sense to go to town and buy a suit of clothes. At least she knows I'll look after Hobart. I don't want him kicking off until he pays me off and gets a decent suit to be laid out in. □

It Appears to Me

by Curly

... A PERSON OUGHT TO HAVE ONE

When I was coming up in Minneapolis some years back, there seemed to be more lakes and rivers than a body could count, not only in our city but in neighboring St. Paul and throughout the state. However, I had a favorite. It was a small stream named Minnehaha Creek near my home in Hennepin County. It was really quite famous for the part it (and the falls by the same name) played in Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's poem, "Hiawatha." For me, it was nearby and just plain pretty.

Thinking back about that stream brings to mind the large amount of copy that has been written over the years about the "care and preservation" of such streams. Recently your friendly U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service produced a new publication with just that in mind. Entitled "Streamside Areas-Management Dividends," this brochure was written mainly for western landowners but is applicable almost anywhere. For single free copies of the publication, write to Publication Request Manager, Western Energy and Land Use Team, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Creekside 1 Building, Redwing Road, Fort Collins, Colorado 80526.

Normally in this part of the page we tell you about things that are available free for the asking. This time I am going to reverse the procedure and suggest that some of you might want to give of yourselves, freely that is, in the United States Forest Service's volunteer program. It seems that if budget cuts go much deeper, many programs such as the YCC and YACC projects will grind to a halt. This would really be a blow to the USFS since it has been dependent for years on the folks in these programs to do all kinds of important things on the millions of acres in the National Forest System. First activated in 1972, the volunteers' program is open to anyone who wishes to become involved. Not only is it a marvelous outlet for individual energy and talent, it is also an excellent way for all manner of conservation and sportsmen's organizations to become involved, with the nation's recreational lands as the beneficiaries.

Any of the many U.S. Forest Service Offices can provide the information you need to get involved...so do it and your time is free.

... FOR YOUR BOOK SHELF

HIKERS, ATTENTION! I have some information for you that can't wait. For the first time since 1974, a revision has been completed on the "Southern Virginia Guidebook" for the Appalachian Trail (AT). This exciting 262-pager in soft cover is a must! It contains complete planning information, general descriptions and detailed hiking directions for the 388.3 miles of the AT from Rockfish Gap to the Virginia-Tennessee border...plus a segment of the former AT which is the 17.4 Iron Mountain Trail in the Mount Rogers National Recreation Area. In addition, there are three of the most beautifully detailed maps that I have seen for quite some time, each of which contains detailed elevation profiles, an index to the applicable 7½-minute quads and other good information. All of this comes in a handy 4½ x 6½ size, inserted in a plastic bag. Cost to members of the Appalachian Trail Conference is \$10.15. For non-members the cost is \$11.95 and for both there is a \$1.75 charge for postage and handling. Pamper yourself and order one. You won't be sorry.

Privacy is a marvelous thing and I'm all for it, but one exception comes to mind at this time and I want to share it with you by asking a question. If you were able to find out about the private life and habits of the gypsy moth and by learning enable yourself to defend your trees, etc. against this critter, would you be interested? Well, I reckon you would, and so was I. Sirs and ma'ams, your friendly United States Department of Agriculture has some suggestions along those lines which they have produced in the form of publications. First of all there is "The Gypsy Moth: An Illustrated Biography," stock no. 001-000-03850-8 (\$1.10); next, "Defoliation of the Gypsy Moth: How It Hurts Your Tree," stock no. 001-000-3747-1 (\$.90); next, "The Homeowner and the Gypsy Moth: Guidelines for Control," stock no. 001-000-03950-4

(\$2.00); and finally, "Major Hardwood Defoliators of the Eastern United States," stock no. 001-000-03852-4 (\$1.20). Any or all four of these are available from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402.

This next item is not a book, it's a map and a special one indeed. As a matter of fact, this special map probably contains more information than some of the books that you have read, and let me tell you it is "timely" (beyond all coincidence) in that the publication of this gem ties in with the forthcoming observance of the Yorktown Bicentennial. "Colonial National Historical Park" is the name of this topographical jewel which is printed in a scale of 1:25,000 on two sides along with some great historical information. Why, there is even information about just where the Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania lines were positioned in opposition to the British Forces, the location of the French Artillery and all manner of interesting details pertaining to the Revolutionary War. If a person has a copy of this map it will be like having a program of that long-ago battle and the other events which took place at that time. It will be useful also in following the events planned during the period of October 16-19, 1981 beginning with the official opening ceremony on October 16th when some four thousand uniformed soldiers of recreated colonial military units from the 13 original states will reenact the beginning of the encampment at Yorktown. The reverse side is the best map of Williamsburg, Jamestown and environs that I have ever seen. All of this is available for just \$2.08 postpaid from the Division of Mineral Resources, McCormick Road, University Campus, P. O. Box 2667, Charlottesville, Virginia 22903.

...AND THEN

"Courtesy is the lubricant that makes society run smoothly. Its outward forms are changing as people become freer in their ways. Is it a dying art? Not if the public shows that it will countenance boorishness. It's up to us. . ." Royal Bank of Canada. □

Growing Up Outdoors

by Sarah Bartenstein

People Outdoors Boy Scouts Cook Their Way to Jamboree

This summer, Virginia will host boy scouts from all over the country at the 1981 National Boy Scout Jamboree. The Jamboree, scheduled to run from July 29 through August 4, will take place at Fort A.P. Hill, a military base near Fredericksburg. The theme of the Jamboree is "Scouting's Reunion With History," and the planners of the event think the site they have chosen is an ideal location in which to reflect on our nation's history: Fort A.P. Hill is in close proximity to many historic places, such as Washington, D.C., our nation's capital; Richmond, once the capital of the Confederacy; and the historic "triangle" area where so many important events took place, Williamsburg-Yorktown-Jamestown.

Although many of us who live in Virginia take for granted the convenience with which we can visit these areas, many young people in other parts of the country have never had the opportunity to see their national capital, or the sites of famous battles of the War Between the States and the American Revolution. Three scouts from California are determined to come east for this year's Jamboree, so to earn the money they need for the trip, they wrote a cookbook. Twelve-year-old James Bybee and two thirteen-year-olds, Jeff Sargent and Scott Hicken, have already sold out of the first printing of *How To Survive While Mom's Away*. The paperback which sells for \$2 contains 56 kitchen-tested recipes and plenty of tips. According to the budding chefs, it's "a cookbook by kids, for kids (and dads, too)."

Jeff, Scott and James figure that if they can sell another 1,000 copies in addition to the first 1,000 they sold, they'll have enough money to go to the Jamboree. They're not taking any chances, though: just in case the second printing does not go as quickly as the first, they are earning money by mowing lawns, painting and babysitting.

Their cooking skills will come in handy at the Jamboree, since scouts fix all their own meals while in camp. Some of the other activities awaiting scouts at Fort A.P. Hill are competitive and athletic events, fishing, boating, educational activities, and exhibits—



the Game Commission is one of the organizations planning an exhibit. Besides the planned activities, the participants will have the chance to meet other scouts from all over the United States, and even scouts from other countries: scouting is an international opportunity.

The three young authors from California will also have the chance to display their culinary skills at the Jamboree when they share some of their recipes at a cooking demonstration.

If you'd like to try your hand at some of the recipes, read on: we've reprinted a few for you here. If you want your own copy of *How To Survive While Mom's Away*, send \$2 to James, Scott and Jeff at 669 Argonaut, Manteca, California 95336—and don't forget to include your name, address and zip code.

TATER TOT CASSEROLE

Utensils:

rectangle baking dish

Ingredients:

- 1 pound ground beef
- 1 can mixed vegetables
- 1 can cream of chicken soup
- 1 package tater tots

Directions:

- 1. Wash hands.
- 2. Crumble raw ground beef into baking dish.
- 3. Spread vegetables evenly over ground beef.
- 4. Spread soup evenly over vegetables.
- 5. Cover with tater tots.
- 6. Bake at 350 until tater tots are browned.

SUN SALAD

Utensils:

- grater
- small bowl
- measuring cup
- medium bowl

Ingredients:

- 1 cup grated carrots
- 1 8-ounce can crushed pineapple
- 1 3-ounce package lemon gelatin
- 1 cup hot water
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon vinegar

Directions:

- 1. Wash hands.
- 2. Clean 2 or 3 carrots and coarsely grate enough for 1 cup.
- 3. Open pineapple and drain thoroughly, saving juice. Set aside.
- 4. Empty gelatin in medium bowl. Add hot water, salt and vinegar and stir until gelatin dissolves.
- 5. Measure pineapple juice, add enough cold water to make 1 cup, and stir into gelatin mixture.
- 6. Chill in refrigerator for 1 hour or until partly set.
- 7. Stir in pineapple and grated carrots.
- 8. Spoon into pan and chill.

MIRACLE COBBLER

Utensils:

- large bowl
- rectangular cake pan
- measuring cups
- egg beater
- measuring spoons

Ingredients:

- 1 cube butter
- 1 cup flour
- 1 cup sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 cup milk
- 5-6 cups canned fruit (drained)
- cinnamon

Directions:

- 1. Wash hands.
- 2. Turn oven to 350.
- 3. Put butter in cake pan and place in oven until butter melts.
- 4. While butter is melting, mix together all other ingredients, except fruit and cinnamon.
- 5. Pour batter in pan and then spoon fruit on top of batter and sprinkle with cinnamon.
- 6. Bake for 45-60 minutes or until top is golden brown and fruit is on the bottom and bubbling. □



Stripers: the Converters

by Gerald Almy

No matter what type of angler you are—sophisticated trout fisherman, blue-jeaned canepoler, or bream fan—you're a likely candidate for conversion once you've given stripers a try.

Caltness pervades the scene on the shores of Lake Gaston. Blue waters lap lightly against the stone rubble along the bank, and the glow of a nearly-setting sun bathes the tall, lakeside pines in a warm, orange light.

Doves careen lithely through the crisp spring air—first reflecting a soft, golden cast from the rays of the sun, then turning into it, becoming black, silhouetted forms as they veer into the afternoon light.

From far in the distance, the muted melody of a trailing beagle filters through the woods.

It is a tranquil scene, with a softness and relaxed milieu that the angler needs. For four hours he has hunkered over the wheel in his pickup camper, rumbling down Interstate 95 on a traffic-clogged Sunday afternoon, soaking in the fumes of diesel and gas. It is a nerve-fraying experience, always.

But now his ringing ears and throbbing skull find relief on the cool shores of the lake. Grabbing a favorite ultralight

spinning stick from the camper rack, he stuffs a box of hooks and a packet of split shot into his jeans, picks up a bucket of shiners and moseys down to the lake.

The rod, victim of a door-slamming amputation, measures only five feet and is light of backbone. The reel, a featherweight, is filled with six-pound line. But at least there is plenty of it—200 yards. It is frail gear for this lake of big fish. But he's there mostly to relax this evening, the angler tells himself. Tomorrow he'll get serious about fishing. And the ultralight stick feels so good in the hand. . .

Impaling a jittery shiner through the lips, he casts the line out into the flow funneling beneath the bridge abutments and settles back onto a flat rock. Two split shot take the minnow deep. Pumping it back gently, like a plastic worm, yields a scrappy 14-inch largemouth in minutes.

The angler is glad as he reaches down to see that the bass is only lip-hooked and can be easily released. He does so quickly, twisting the hook out and watching as the bass darts back into the depths.



By now the sun is poised on the treetops of the lake horizon. It has turned from orange to a fiery red. A thin veil of cirrus clouds frosts the sky with a patchwork of reflected color. The angler is totally relaxed now, recouped from the harried interstate drive.

And another fish is tapping at the bait. Peck. Peck.

Sharply he raises the rod, pulling the barb home into the unseen lips of a Lake Gaston resident.

The fish shakes its head slowly, ploddingly.

Again the angler drives the hook home for good measure.

And that is the match that ignites the tinderbox. Exploding with a burst of fury at the sting of the cold blue steel, the fish races for midlake with a speed and strength the angler has never seen before. Line melts from the spool of the Mitchell 308 like thread from a bobbin.

Only seconds have elapsed since the hookup, but the angler is in a cold sweat. His heart races wildly, climbing into his throat.

When will the run stop, he agonies, both delighting and

fretting simultaneously at the uncontrollable strength of the brute on his line.

He knows his quarry now, too. No fish in freshwater could display such blinding speed and bullish stamina except a striper. His eyes glow at the sheer joy of experiencing a monstrous fish rampaging against tiny tackle.

The line on his spool is frighteningly low when the big striped bass finally ends its initial spurt with a surface flourish. It is half again the distance of a football field from the fisherman. When he sees the boil, it takes a wild leap of imagination for the angler to believe that that fish, surfacing so far off, is connected to his tiny spool of line back on land. But connected it is, still, through some miracle.

Before he has time to ruminate on this oddity, the striper changes course and swims straight at him. The angler's stomach drops. Slack line! Reeling frantically, he prays that the fish is still on. Half a spool back, he again feels the sweet throbbing of the big, line-sided bass.

And again the fish speeds off in a burst of rage.

The Stripper Tacklebox



Ranny Isenberg, the converted sunfish enthusiast, with one of the Smith Mountain Lake stripers that converted him (left). Bucktails—with or without pork—are great stripper enticers: the most effective ones range from $\frac{1}{8}$ to 3 ounces (above).

Stripers are brutes. Mean to the core, they are uncompromising in the demands they place on tackle.

But one can, in reacting to such ferocity, gear up with rods of so little give, so much spine, lines with so much strength, so little frailty, that the stripper's very essence is broken, his determination shattered before the fight even begins.

The essence of a stripper's fight, claim aficionados, is in his searing, drag-engaging runs. Experiencing the speed and strength the fish displays in these amazing rushes for freedom is a delight no angler should forego by choosing tackle that overpowers the fish, stifling his courage and fire.

But neither is it sporting to use gear too light for the task at hand, incapable of subduing the quarry efficiently. That will only work the brain into a tizzy of frustration as fish after fish shreds your line.

The trick is to tailor tackle choice to the angling at hand. Light, even ultralight tackle, has a place in stripper fishing. On Kentucky Lake, stripers to 45 pounds have been landed on six-pound mono.

To take big fish on light gear such as this, though, you should be skilled in fighting big fish on thin lines. Secondly, the fish should be striking small lures. Thirdly, the fishing must be done in open areas free of line-threatening obstructions.

Rods for this featherweight sport should be in the light or medium-light designation, so there is enough backbone to set hooks. Reels should be quality-made models with butter-smooth drags and capable of holding at least 180 yards of six-pound mono or 140 yards of eight-pound line.

For all-around stripper fishing from boats, regular medium-weight bass

tackle and the lighter versions of the new "stripper" rods and reels are perfect. Spinning reels holding 10- to 15-pound line and bait-casting reels spooled with 12- to 17-pound mono are excellent for rockfish when coupled with five-and-a-half to six-and-a-half-foot medium-action rods.

Where distance casting becomes necessary, such as in tailrace fishing, different gear is required. The situation faced here is much like that encountered by the surf fisherman: Big fish, often hovering quite a ways from shore.

The solution lies in using moderately light lines and long rods. On many Southern tailwaters, rods measuring 11 to 14 feet are not uncommon. They aren't affectations.

Time after time, those whipping casts near the length of a football field with these lengthy poles will catch fish while the short rod wielder goes strikeless.

Light line also helps attain distance for this casting, but seldom can line testing less than 12 pounds be used without frequent break-offs. Seventeen- to 20-pound is more common still among tailrace anglers.

There are circumstances where heavier tackle still may be used to capture Southern stripers consistently: Boat fishing with large live baits such as herring; deep jigging at 60-foot depths; trolling; or simply fishing for unusually large stripers. For these situations, the heavy "stripper" rods and reels are perfect. Measuring six and a half to eight feet, such rods have long handles, making two-handed casts a breeze. They also feature stiff actions for setting hooks solidly and horsing fish out of timber.

A large-capacity bait-casting reel spooled with 20- to 25-pound line is the perfect match for one of these beefy rods. □

Patience, the fisherman waits its second run out, then begins a slug-fest of short spurts, close-in bull-dogging and precarious bottom-rubbing. Slowly, ever so slowly, he regains line.

The angler is wearing down now, frazzled from the fight. But the big fish isn't about to give up so easily. Angling down the stone rip-rap along the road, she comes precariously close to the sharp rock edges where a quick rub would give her freedom.

Tip-toeing and stumbling after her in the waning light, the angler catches up, turns her a last time. The fish is close now, and looks awesome finning gently beneath the surface 20 feet out. Her stripes stand out vividly, even in the pale twilight.

He can see defeat in her eyes. Pumping, then reeling, the angler scrambles down to the water's edge and cradles the rod in his lap. Forcefully, he jams both his thumbs inside the fish's lower jaw. As he lifts the big bass clear, water splashes over him—a final gesture of defiance from the lordly stripper.

JULY 1981

On hand scales at a friend's house later that night, the fish weighs 20 pounds.

On the shores of Lake Gaston that drama-filled spring night, a stripper fisherman was born. True, the angler had caught stripers before in freshwater. He had marveled at their beauty, stamina, speed and gameness. But the sunset battle on Gaston, on tackle most sportsmen would reserve for panfish, had been far and above the most intense and fulfilling angling experience of his life. And the fish that had made it possible, a sleek, beautifully-formed, 20-pound hen stripper, had locked his interest and affections in for good on this "new" nomadic species of gamefish that has invaded the Virginia angling scene so compellingly of late.

He was, in short, no longer just a fisherman who liked to catch whatever gamefish he could, including stripers, but a stripper fanatic. It is a breed of fisherman that is becoming more and more prevalent as these big true bass make further and further inroads into the otherwise staid and stable southern angling scene.

Smith Mountain Lake yields another prize for Gary Payne (right). A couple of converts on Lake Gaston: bucktail fished on medium-weight spinning gear, 8-pound line, brought this striped bass from Leesville Lake (below).



Are you a sophisticated trout fisherman?
He will convert you, this fish that could wolf down the biggest specimen you caught in the last year for a mere breakfast snack.

Are you a gustatorially-inclined bream fan?
He will convert you. The two slab-sides from an average rockfish will make more dinners than a waist-to-toe stringer of bluegills. And taste better, too, many claim.

A white bass fisherman?
"Cousins" of white bass, stripers are fish with similar behavior patterns, caught in like fashion. But they bust the surface with twice the white's fury, belt your lure with more force, run three times as far, weigh five times as much.

Are you a saltwater fisherman who likes to catch your "rock" in the brine? Absorbing sport, it's true, but in recent years saltwater has been far from generous in coughing up a bounty of sleek stripers. Countless ocean and bay probers have moved their base of operation inland in response to the superb rockfishing now transpiring on the man-made lakes of the South.

He is the convert-maker, this gladiator in brilliant garb of black, silver and white. Slipping into the freshwater fishing scene mysteriously in the 1940's, like a night raider, he has been knocking dead his detractors with finesse and brute strength ever since. Some even contend that the striper will usurp the hitherto-undisputed throne of that bright, brassy sunfish, the largemouth bass.

He knows no bounds of species preference or class in those he chooses to convert.

Are you a blue-jeaned canepoler who delights in nothing better than a sprightly "speck" bending your bamboo stick? The striper will convert you. He will, sooner or later, smash into your tiny jigs and minnows, splintering your tackle with a single, powerful lunge.

Your imagination will be captured. Finding stouter gear, you'll return, dangle bigger jigs and minnows in the water, and this time put the brakes on the South's hottest gamefish. After your first such dose of quality striper fishing, you will be hooked. Possibly for life.

Stripers know no bounds of angling methods and angler disposition, either.

Are you a still fisherman? The laid-back type who likes to throw out a bait, sit back, relax and soak in tranquillity? Stripers will oblige you. Up to a point. When they crash one of your baits anchored on the bottom, they'll shatter your peace, at least for a while. Then you can go back to your reveries.

Or are you a hard-driving, cast-and-retrieve angler? You, too, will find sustenance among the line-sided bass.

And so, too, the troller will, the deep jigger, the night fisher, the morning riser, the evening angler, the fly fisherman.

All can, under the right conditions, catch stripers in numbers and sizes that often defy belief—until it happens to you.

Mostly, though, it is hard-core bass casters who are swelling the ranks of striper fanatics. These converts still feel that largemouths are handsome, hard-fighting fish and challenging to catch.

But stripers, they say, are all this and more.

Rockfish will never be as widespread in distribution as largemouths, since they cannot, for practical purposes, thrive in small streams, pothole ponds and shallow lakes like the adaptable bigmouth can. And they will never be quite as accessible as a bass, which can be caught along shorelines and in quiet coves in just about any lake they inhabit.

Stripers need bigger water to thrive, and deeper, open territory in which to roam. But with the plethora of man-made impoundments dotting the South today, rare is the angler who is more than an hour or two's drive from a prime striped bass lake.

And finally, a striper's fight, claim its advocates, makes a largemouth's look weak in comparison. "The average striper is a whole lot bigger than the average bass. He's a stronger fish, too." So says Stu Tinney of Nashville, Tennessee, who has personally caught and recorded over 50,000 of these trophy fish. "They'll take a lot more line out than any bass."

Ranny Isenberg, wallpaper hanger from Manassas, Virginia, typifies the most common breed of striper convert haunting the lakes of the South today. For years he was strickly a bass maniac. He lived, breathed, talked bass. Bass tackle. Bass boats. Bass books. Bass lures. Bass tournaments. Largemouths and smallmouths were the only quarries he needed throbbing on the end of his line, bellyflopping on his favorite lake's surface.

But that was before he met the striper, the real member of the bass family — not a sunfish, which largemouth and smallmouth are. When a ten-pound rock wolfed down Isenberg's bait on a cold, moonlit night several years back on a North Carolina lake, it was love at first bite. The fish wrenched line from his reel like no other quarry had done before. It was a toss-up as to who was hooked more—fish or fisherman.

Isenberg still probes for "bass" of the large and smallmouth variety, because they are accessible practically right outside his door. But give him a day or two free from work, and the Old Dominion's striper waters—Kerr, Gaston, Smith Mountain, Anna—will draw his pickup and bass boat the way a magnet attracts iron.

Why so hooked? Many reasons, not the least of which was the size of that first fish. In a lifetime of bass fishing, Isenberg had never even fractured the eight-pound barrier. Yet his first striper was a husky 10-pounder. And he knew enough about these fish to realize that this was merely an "average" striped bass. Later, a 20-pounder taken from the same lake clinched that fact for good. Never in his wildest dreams could he expect to land a 20-pound largemouth. But here, in only his third year of rockfishing, he had done so.

Ten-pounders are commonplace now for Isenberg.

The same night he took his first pin-striped fish, Isenberg also heard great rumblings and splashings coming from the moon-drenched lake surface that sounded like hogs being thrown into the water. It was the sound of rockfish gorging on shad. So jittery did the raucously-feeding fish make him that he could barely tie a knot in his line and control his shaking hands enough to cast straight. Never before had he heard such a commotion from the more sedate bigmouths he was used to.

It was this excitement—the adrenalin-churning atmosphere that often accompanies striper fishing—that contributed in large part to the sport's tremendous attraction for him, Isenberg realized later. The point was brought home sharply on a trip he and a friend took on Virginia's jewel-like Smith Mountain Lake, nestled in the shadows of the Blue Ridge Mountains near Roanoke.

Rain began pitter-pattering on the windshield five miles from the lake. By the time the pair had their 16-foot Lowe bass boat in the water, their gear was soaked from the steady drizzle.

But stripers love the rain. The two anglers knew it, and ventured forth to probe the points with light bucktails and spinning gear. A fish here, a fish there, rewarded their efforts through the afternoon. Finally, welcome night descended on the lake. White shrouds of swirling mist, thick fog and steady rain lent an eerie atmosphere to the lake waters.

Now the stripers were in coves, chasing shad. Probing the shore with Spots and Racket Shads, inched haltingly back from the banks, yielded increasing numbers of fat, belligerent rockfish. It was a rich reward for their sodden, nocturnal efforts. Exhausted, their weary bones cried for rest. At 1:30 a.m., Isenberg and his partner motored back to the dock and crawled into the pickup camper for brief rest.

Dawn—gray and silent—crept over the lake, beckoning the fishermen. Again they arose and hit the water, inching jigs through the clear lake to simulate shad slinking for cover.

The stripers bit well, but over the lake a storm was brewing. By late afternoon, even the tiny cove the anglers were fishing was being whipped to a froth. The rain that had been a light drizzle throughout the trip suddenly turned mean. It came down in hard, driving sheets, stung like tiny daggers biting at their exposed flesh. It soaked through their raingear and snowmobile suits, sending shivery ice trickles down their necks.

Neither talked about it, for talk meant yelling through the loud downpour. But they both realized it was sheer madness to be out fishing in such hostile weather. Yet still they persisted, even as the situation worsened.

Why? Stripers, that's why.

Wild and unafraid of the storm, striped bass love such inhospitable weather. Biting into the face of the storm, gritting their teeth, the anglers learned on that stormy afternoon to fathom the stark beauty of the dark tempest overtaking the lake.

As night settled quickly over Smith Mountain, Isenberg made a final cast to a sharp point. Savagely, a 10-pounder slashed at the lure and dove, peeling line from the reel with a fury to match the storm. Isenberg pumped the fish close, but the 40-mph winds pushed the boat away. The rod bent double. The eight-pound line neared the parting point, and it was several precarious minutes before the outstretched net finally slipped under the heavy, flopping fish.

Slamming the throttle down, the drenched fishermen bounced and rocked back to port through breaking whitecaps and a churning lake.

At the dock, they heaved a sigh of relief to be alive—and a sigh of delight to be striper fishermen. □

Personalities

by Francis N. Satterlee

Harold A. Trumbo Supervising Game Biologist

Harold A. Trumbo is a native of Fulks Run, Virginia, where his father owned and farmed some 200 acres. There were six Trumbo brothers and three sisters. "Hal" was the youngest.

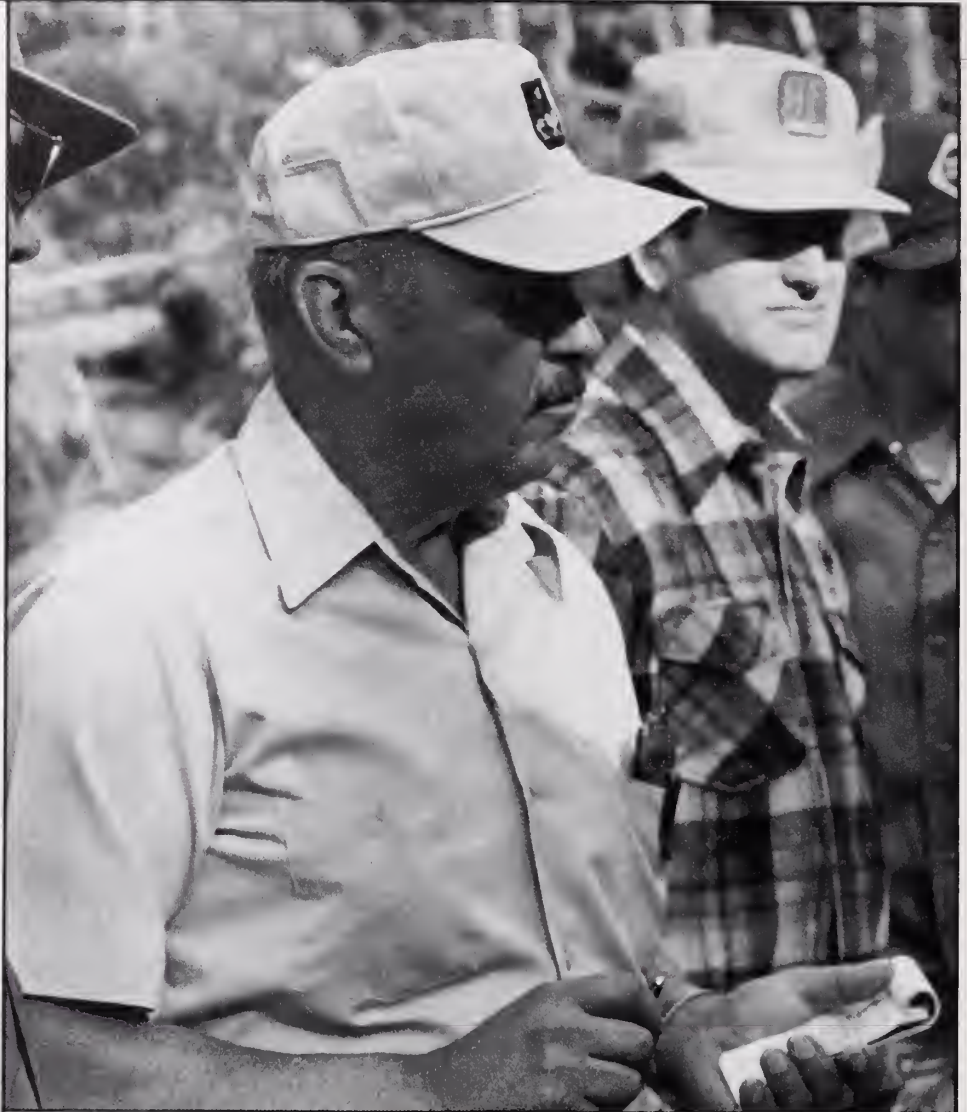
Although his father did some hunting and fishing, it was the influence of his older brothers in regard to the outdoors, wildlife and hunting that formulated Hal's early and enduring interest. However, like any self-supporting farm family, all concerned had seemingly never-ending chores which did not allow for much free time, and the boys hunted and fished whenever they could.

Following his graduation from high school in Broadway, Virginia, Hal enrolled in Bridgewater College to major in public education. This led him to a teaching position at the Lynville-Edon High School, where he taught history, math and coached basketball and baseball.

In September 1952, during the Korean War, he was drafted into the U.S. Army. His service in Korea was with the 2nd Amphibious Support Brigade. He was discharged in August 1954, following the armistice.

Trumbo returned to Virginia and accepted a position at Bridgewater Elementary School. After one year at the school he transferred to Lexington where he served as head teacher at an elementary school until 1957. It was while he was in Lexington that he read a notice announcing the beginning of a new conservation short course for teachers. The innovative course was to be taught by Ed Mundy at Virginia Polytechnic Institute in Blacksburg. Trumbo enrolled and graduated from the first class in the summer of 1957.

Attendance at that short course opened new horizons for Trumbo in that he learned about the existence of the wildlife field as a profession. This piqued his interest and, during the fall of 1957, he enrolled at VPI in the Wildlife Management program, and after graduation, he was hired by the Game Commission in March 1959.



Trumbo's first assignment was in the Christiansburg area as a district game biologist. In 1962 he was transferred to Roanoke as supervising game biologist; during a realignment of the Game Division in 1972, he moved to Buckingham. He is now responsible for the twenty-six counties of the central Piedmont and for the Cooperative Game Management programs which the Game Commission conducts with the four state forests, two military areas (Fort A.P. Hill and Fort Pickett), the Virginia Division of Parks, plus commercial wood products companies located in the Commonwealth. This month he will be working extensively with the Game Commission's exhibit at the Boy Scout Jamboree being held at Fort A.P. Hill.

The most satisfying aspect of his job is the work in the field with sportsmen and with the other professionals to provide continued good game and fish seasons, and an ample supply of the renewable resources through sound scientific management. He also enjoys the freedom of working in the outdoors, which enables him to enjoy nature and the entire spectrum of a rewarding and enriching vocation. He feels that his choice was very wise that summer long ago when he enrolled in the first summer conservation short course which ultimately resulted in his employment with the Game Commission.

Harold's wife Doris recently passed away. Their three children, Charles, Esther and Ruth Anne, reside in the Old Dominion. □

Four Days on the Nottoway

Four long-distance canoe travelers try the Nottoway River.

by Bob Beck



It had been raining most of the night and continued to drizzle as we traveled in the pre-dawn darkness. We were aware that the Nottoway might be flooded, but it was too late to call off the trip at this point, or at least until we reached the take-out point where we were to meet two canoeing friends from Richmond.

For the more than ten years that Carroll Hatcher and I have been canoeing together, we have had a particular goal in mind: to learn everything we can about canoe travel—regardless of the weather—and we plan eventually to take an extended trip into the wilderness of Canada to explore part of the James Bay area. In the meantime, we are continually seeking new rivers to run, testing new equipment, and preparing different foods that best fit our needs for a long voyage.

Since we are more interested in canoeing as a mode of transportation than in canoeing as a sport or an end in itself, we find it increasingly difficult to find rivers in our area that are long enough for a four-day trip.

We differ from the white water canoeist, who rightly enjoys shooting the rapids, and from the canoeist who considers 15 miles a long trip. We rarely consider a stream unless it has 50 to 75 miles of canoeable water.

The Nottoway was an ideal river for this purpose. It was remote, surrounded by beautiful, unspoiled woodlands, and offered enough distance to make the trip interesting. There was some flat water that required arduous paddling, but in general the river was pleasant to travel. The most enjoyable area was through the fall line where we found little or no difficulty running the class 2 and 3 rapids, although our canoes were heavily loaded: each held about 500 pounds of cargo and passengers. David Young and David Adderhold, two friends from Richmond who joined our travels about four years ago, were waiting at the take-out point. We quickly loaded canoes and duffle on one vehicle and began the 45-minute shuttle to Gills Bridge along the eastern boundary of Camp Pickett military reservation.

Rain was still falling at 8 a.m. when we put in and the water was about 18

*Whitewater canoeing has its own rewards;
we prefer the kind of trip that offers
the chance to call a turkey,
or watch the activity on the riverbank,
or chat with a local farmer.*

inches above normal, not dangerous yet. But by Sunday the river had risen to five feet and gave us a ride to be remembered.

Once in mid-stream, we set a pace of about 24 strokes per minute and began our assault on the Nottaway.

The first few miles passed quickly in the fast current and soon we entered the backwaters of the Baskerville Dam. As we approached the dam, we moved with caution while the roar of water pouring over the dam made it impossible for each of us to hear the others' voices. The old mill rests on the left bank of the river and doesn't have an easy portage, yet we were able to carry around the end on the right side.

We camped the first evening at the mouth of Waqua Creek. And, although it rained intermittently all day and most of the night, we did manage to set up camp between showers.

Next morning, the skies began to clear and we hoped for a better second day, but it began raining again before noon with one thunderstorm after another. In spite of the rain, we began our descent through the fall line (a rocky shelf separating the Piedmont Plateau and Coastal Plains).

Here we encountered some of the fastest water of trip, dropping over rocky ledges and through narrow shoots, often tricky but not dangerous.

We traveled 17 miles that day and enjoyed every minute of it. The woodlands had come alive with beautiful flowering trees and shrubs. The wild azaleas, dogwoods and redbuds were in full bloom and made the riverbank look like a well-kept garden. More than once we heard a wild turkey gobble in the distance. We made camp in a wooded area upstream from Smith Bridge and began to dry our wet clothing by the campfire.

Soon after we were settled and began to relax our stiff and sore muscles, we saw a tractor pull up beside the river about 50 yards downstream. The driver was the farmer who owned the land on which we were camping and gave us his permission to stay there. He was making his daily visit to the river to see if the shad had begun their annual spawning run. After talking a while, the farmer turned to leave. But before he had gotten out of sight, one of the most violent thunderstorms of the trip came up out of the southeast and drenched our clothes again and put out the campfire. I'm sure the farmer got soaked, as we had been for most of the trip.

The third day, we broke camp early and loaded the water-tight cargo boxes—which had grown considerably heavier with each rain-soaked leg of our journey; And we began another day on the river.

Most of the day we spent paddling through slow water near Fort Nottaway and Island Swamp. The area offered little in the way of potential campsites until we reached the edge of Mush Pond swamp and we made camp for the last time. It was the only place we'd seen for miles that wasn't covered with poison ivy.

Although this trip had been planned around the spring gobbler season, we had not been able to hunt or fish because of the weather. It was early in the afternoon when we made camp and long after the 11 a.m. closing hour of spring gobbler season. Although it was Saturday afternoon and I wouldn't have a chance to hunt again while on the river, my curiosity urged me to scout the woods for turkey signs.

Soon after leaving camp, I began following an old logging road along the edge of the swamp and almost immediately found turkey tracks in the moist





ground. I stopped suddenly and began to listen for anything that sounded like a turkey—I thought I heard something, but I wasn't sure. I strained, and listened again.

An old tree that had blown over lay just ahead of me made a perfect blind, so I eased over to the tree and climbed up on its trunk and began scanning the area. My heart jumped in my throat as I saw a turkey raise its head above the weeds in a cut-over area about 60 yards ahead of me.

While my heart beat loudly, I kept a close eye on the stubbled weeds and wished that the Game Commission had set different closing hours for spring turkey season—if only for this one day, this one opportunity!

Here I was, nearly 45 miles downriver from our vehicle and at the edge of a swamp with no way in or out except the river or through knee-deep muck and swamp water; I admit that, more than once, I was tempted to run back to camp and trade my camera for a shotgun. But I decided against it when I saw David Young easing his way along the old logging road toward me. I motioned for him to join me in the tree and told him what had happened.

A few times in my life I'd been able to call turkeys within range by cupping my hands over my mouth and trying to imitate a hen turkey, so I decided to give it a try.

I called three times in succession, just loudly enough to cause any tom in the area to take notice, and sure enough, up popped a head, much closer than before. I called again, more quietly this time. Almost immediately a young tom with a three-inch beard crossed the log road less than 40 yards away. I could hear him in the underbrush searching for the hen that wasn't there.

I didn't get a picture, but I didn't really care. I had been able to call a turkey in close without a mechanical caller and though the method is crude and wouldn't win a calling contest, that day on the Nottaway will long be remembered as one of the most enjoyable I've spent in the outdoors.

Experiences like that one make a four-day canoe trip special. A white water trip has its own rewards, but I prefer the kind of excursion during which I can take the time to notice all that the river has to offer, whether it's a rainstorm, a conversation with a local farmer, or a brush with a wild turkey. □

The Horseshoe Crab: Our Living Fossil

Despite its fearsome appearance, two-foot length and close proximity to man, I've yet to hear of anyone being attacked, bitten, or even inadvertently injured by the so-called horsehoe crab. Nor have I discovered anyone who has eaten one! Actually, the horseshoe's proper name is "King Crab" and they are somewhat famous for they are truly living fossils. They have survived the changes and challenges of time with only minor alterations in form since Permian times, two hundred and ten million years, preceding the great dinosaurs by millions of years.

Despite its appearance, the horseshoe is not a true crab but a member of a genus of marine arthropods whose nearest

relatives are spiders. They're coastal animals which require brackish water of high salinity for survival. The species is common from Nova Scotia to the Yucatan Peninsula of Central America. Dark brown in color and up to two feet or more in length, the horseshoe is covered mainly by a carapace whose shape gives the animal its common name. Some scientists believe that it is this hood-like cover which protects vital body parts and appendages, and its unobtrusive habits which have prolonged the animal's survival. A small second shell and the hard pointed tail or telson, which can be one half of the animal's total length, follow behind the more prominent horseshoe-shaped carapace. The mouth is cen-

by Dinny Slaughter





trally located under the body near the six pairs of legs, five of which are pincer-tipped and used to cut up food before it enters the mouth. The last pair of legs, however, are specialized pushers. There are two sets of eyes, one compound and one simple. Their natural habitat is found in the sandy and muddy bottoms of tidal bays and estuaries where they feed nocturnallu on worms and soft molluska.

No one seems to eat the horseshoe crabs. Although I do eat most other game, fish and molluska, I don't think I'd want to try it. The crabs are used in some areas for fertilizers.

A visit to Seashore State Park at the mouth of the Chesa-

apeake Bay will acquaint those intereted in seeing and learning more about them with dead horseshoes in all stages of decomposition. Its high tide line is literally one long crab dump, and the beach is littered with the remains of thousands of crabs. That area of the Chesapeake is, perhaps not coincidentally, a holding area for the dozens of large cargo, coal, and oil tankers sitting at anchor awaiting permission to enter the nearby port.

Live horseshoes can be caught and observed at low tide in the shallow waters and mud flats of Tom's Cove which is located just behind Assateague Beach and is easily accessible by car. □



Outdoor Notebook

edited by Mel White

Buggs Island: Virginia's Big Crappie Capital

Buggs Island Lake has earned its new reputation as the big crappie capital of Virginia. Known mainly for its striped bass and largemouth bass fishing, it is now the leading producer of citation size crappie in Virginia.

Last year Buggs Island produced 27 citation crappie and judging by the success enjoyed early in 1981, the fishing is still on its way up. Early this season, Carl Herring of Virginia Beach caught a 4-pound, 8-ounce lunker, not far short of the record 4-pound, 13½-ounce crappie caught at Lake Conner in 1967. Numerous fish over three pounds have been reported this spring.

The best known authority on Buggs Island crappie fishing is Wavery Presson of Boydton. The veteran fisherman says the best way to catch the big ones at Buggs Island is to use a 1/16-ounce jig, baited with a live minnow and fish it close to the stumps back in the coves. □

Common Redpoll in Virginia

by Erma J. Fox

I remember reading your article (November 1978) about the common redpoll. On February 28th I was watching the birds eating at our bird feeder and mistook the small birds for purple finch. A car passed by and scared the birds into flight. I heard a thud and thought a bird had crashed into our picture window. Looking around I could see only the long whip C.B. antenna on my car swaying a little. On our patio was a little ball of feathers. I went outside and picked it up and wrapped it in a towel and put it in a box. Comparing it with the birds in my field guide I found that it wasn't a purple finch at all but a female redpoll. I was so excited because I found a bird new to me—and then to read that they are not very common in Virginia made me even more excited. The redpoll soon started squirming and I knew she was going to live. I took her in my hands and stood outside to let her fly away. □



Colonel's Commentary

Perhaps no law has ever received so much attention through public humor as the law which requires a fishing license. Game wardens around the state never have a season that excludes the tale of an officer apprehending two fishermen. One runs as the officer approaches, and of course, he gives gallant pursuit. The runner has a license, but his companion, who calmly sat there with the hat on his head turned sideways by the winds of the "pursue" and the "pursuer," has no license. He is conveniently gone when the officer returns.

I enjoy a good laugh, even when the laugh is on me. However, don't be deceived by humor. Don't let the humor associated with this and other methods of "getting away with it" lull you into thinking that this is a trivial law. To use our wonderful resources without paying is the same as stealing.

The state allows a number of exemptions from the fishing license requirement. Any person under 16 or over 65 can tangle with a lunker bass and not have to look over his shoulder to see if a game warden is watching. Any guest on a private pond need not hide his pole

under the leaves when he sees a patrol car coming up the road. Service men from other states who are stationed in Virginia can obtain the less expensive resident license, and this is also true of non resident students enrolled in one of the state's educational institutions. The student is not even required to be passing English grammar to get a resident license!

There are other exceptions and limitations, but these are given to show that the state endeavors to recognize the multitude of needs among the people. However, we believe that the license requirement is serious business and that people from sixteen to sixty-five upon whom the gentle yoke falls carry the future of conservation upon their shoulders. If each citizen could see what his license dollar accomplishes! You would see trout in the streams, stripers bending a rod, grouse on the wing and deer springing over a downed log. That's the result of the license dollar.

When the judge says "ten dollars and costs" and the gavel echoes the finality of the statement, "trivial" is not the adjective to describe the moment. □

TU Annual Meeting is August 14

Trout Unlimited will hold its annual meeting and banquet on August 14 and 15 at the Ingleside Inn in Staunton. Featured speaker at the banquet will be Gaylord Nelson, chairman of the Wilderness Society and former Democratic Senator from Wisconsin.

Also included in the program will be three workshops and an auction which will feature the original painting of the first Trout Unlimited print and stamp program. Titled "The Bridge Pool," this painting is by the noted Connecticut wildlife artist, Robert K. Abbet. Many other interesting items are also scheduled for auction. Outdoor events include numerous trout fishing trips guided by local TU members.

All Trout Unlimited members are urged to attend, and the public is cordially invited. For more details contact Corbin Dixon, Rt.1 Box 12, Fishersville, Virginia 22929 □

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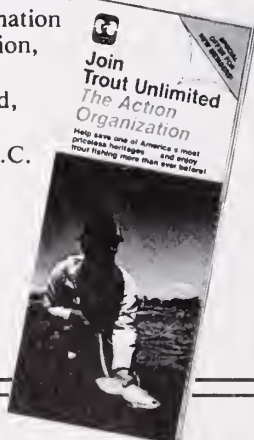
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Chief Forest Warden Receives Service Award

Floyd Hostetter, retiring Virginia Division of Forestry Chief for Rockbridge County, was recently presented an award for service by the Virginia Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries. The certificate was presented by the Game Commission Forester, Jared P. Sims, at a banquet in Lexington in honor of Mr. Hostetter's retirement.

Hostetter was honored for his excellent record in prevention and suppression of forest fires on the Goshen Wildlife Management Area during his twenty years as Chief Forest Warden for the Virginia Division of Forestry.

The Goshen Wildlife Area contains 16,128 acres of rugged mountainous terrain. Fire control on Game Commission's management areas is accomplished through a cooperative agreement with the Division of Forestry. This agreement renders to the Commission lands the same degree of fire prevention and suppression that the Division of Forestry provides to adjacent privately owned lands. This includes prevention, detection and supervisory services on fires.

Floyd Hostetter's personal contributions to fire control exemplifies the spirit of the cooperative agreement between the two state agencies. In his twenty years of service, he had an excellent record of response to need which resulted in an untold savings of dollars in fire control and lost forest acreage. □

"Self's Black Lab, Sam, with Buffelhead"
William A. Martz

Special Hunting Issue to be Published In September

The staff of Virginia Wildlife plans a special issue for September 1981 which will be devoted to hunting and related topics such as game cooking, hunting laws, and guns and ammunition. Renowned outdoor writers Gerald Almy, Charley Dickey, Joel Vance, Joan Cone and others will have articles featured in this issue. The special edition will have additional pages and more feature stories than usual.

If you are currently subscribing, check your mailing label to make sure that your subscription will not expire before the September issue. If you are not a subscriber and would like to begin receiving Virginia Wildlife in time to receive the special issue, clip the coupon on the next page, fill it out and send it to the Game Commission with your payment today. Subscription orders take up to eight weeks to process. □

Our Crabs Are the Best

There are Alaska's king crab, the West Coast's Dungeness crab, and various species of stone crabs, too. But for the very best eating, none tops our own blue crab of the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts. From Maine to Mexico, this is the crab, and the crabmeat, that gourmets favor and gourmands devour with pitchers of beer from tables covered with old newspapers.

Whether you want to eat crabs or crabmeat, the only way to begin is by cooking your hard crabs.

BOILED BLUE CRAB

- 12 live, hard crabs
- 3 quarts boiling water
- 1 tablespoon salt

Place live crabs in boiling salted water. Cover and reheat to boiling. Then reduce heat and simmer for five to seven minutes, after which they should be drained and rinsed in cold water. Refrigerate crabs as soon as they reach room temperature.

If you pick crabmeat from your catch instead of eating it at once, pack it into sanitary, airtight containers. It can be frozen at home for about six months, although it will lose some of its fine qualities. Only keep crabmeat in the refrigerator for a day or two. Don't take any chances with crabs or crabmeat. Food poisoning from spoiled crabs can be very serious!

Seafood bisques are always delicious, and this one is easy to put together.

CRAB BISQUE

- 1 pound blue crabmeat, fresh or pasteurized
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped onion

by Joan Cone

- 2 tablespoons finely chopped celery
- ¼ cup melted butter or margarine
- 2 tablespoons flour
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon paprika
- Dash pepper
- 1 quart milk
- ¼ cup chopped parsley

Remove any remaining pieces of shell or cartilage from crabmeat. Cook onion and celery in margarine or butter until tender but not brown. Blend in flour and seasonings. Add milk gradually, stirring constantly, and cook until thick. Add crabmeat and heat. Just before serving, sprinkle with parsley. (Makes 6 servings)

When you want a wonderful meal you can put together in minutes, this superb casserole is the answer.

CRABMEAT-BROCCOLI CASSEROLE

- 1 pound blue crabmeat, fresh or pasteurized
- 2 packages (10 ounces each) frozen broccoli spears, defrosted
- 4 tablespoons butter
- 4 tablespoons flour
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 cups half and half cream or milk
- 2 tablespoons coarsely chopped pimiento
- 4 tablespoons slivered almonds

Remove any pieces of shell or cartilage from crabmeat. Cut broccoli stems into bite-size pieces, keeping flowerettes separate. In a medium saucepan, melt butter; add flour and salt. Stir in cream or milk and cook over moderate heat until thickened, stirring constantly. Fold in crabmeat and pimiento. Arrange broccoli flowerettes around edge of a shallow baking dish. Fill center with remaining broccoli pieces and spoon crabmeat sauce over broccoli in center of casserole. Sprinkle almonds over top. Bake in a moderate oven (375°) for 20 minutes or until hot and bubbly. (Serves 6)



On a hot summer day what could be more wonderful than iced tea and a plate of crabmeat salad!

CRAB SALAD IN LIME MOLD

- 1 pound blue crabmeat, fresh or pasteurized
- 1 can (1 pound, 4½ ounces) pineapple tidbits, reserve juice
- ½ cup chopped pecans
- ½ cup mayonnaise or salad dressing
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice
- ¼ teaspoon salt

Remove any pieces of shell or cartilage from crabmeat. Drain pineapple, reserving juice. Combine pineapple, crabmeat, pecans, mayonnaise, lemon juice and salt. Toss lightly.

LIME MOLD

- 1 package (6 ounces) lime flavored gelatin
- 1½ cups boiling water
- 2 cups reserved pineapple juice and water to make volume
- ¼ cup lemon juice

Dissolve gelatin in boiling water. Add pineapple juice and lemon juice. Mix well. Pour into a 1-quart ring mold. Chill until firm. Unmold on salad greens and fill center with crabmeat salad. (Serves 6) □

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On the Waterfront

Edited by James N. Kerrick

Safe Boating Tips

BEFORE LEAVING

1. Before departing on any boat trip, leave a "FLOAT PLAN" with someone ashore. This float plan should include: your name and telephone number, a description of your boat (including name, make, color, length and any other pertinent information, such as whether it is a power or sail boat), a description of your car and where you left it, the number of passengers you're carrying, destination, proposed route, estimated departure and arrival times, and other information (such as a description of the radio you have on board, and the channel number to monitor) which you feel would aid in finding you should an emergency develop. Also list important phone numbers such as the U.S. Coast Guard (804/398-6231) and your local sheriff and/or game warden.

2. Good housekeeping is even more important afloat than ashore. Cleanliness diminishes the probability of fire and tripping hazards.

3. Have at least an anchor and sufficient line to insure a good hold in strong winds.

4. Carry a secondary means of propulsion. On small boats either a second small engine, oars or paddles will suffice.

5. Make sure your boat is equipped with a bailer. It's a good idea to carry a hand bailer or scoop even when equipped with an electric bilge pump.

6. Carry a compass if you normally operate on large bodies of water.

7. Know the various distress signals. Carry a mirror, flashlight, flares, smoke, etc. to insure you can be seen if trouble develops. On some Virginia waters, distress signals are a U.S.C.G. requirement.

8. Learn the weather warning signals and check the forecast.

9. Properly maintain, stow, and learn to use the safety equipment carried on board your vessel. In an emergency, the equipment will do you little good if it is unserviceable, stowed in an unreachable location, or if you are unfamiliar with its operation or use.

10. Carry sufficient tools for minor repairs.

11. Show your passengers where the

emergency equipment is and how to use it.

12. Develop and use a check list to ensure that you have everything you need aboard.

13. Get up-to-date charts of the area in which you plan to boat.

14. Carry extra fuel in portable marine fuel tank or safety can. "Out of fuel" is the most frequent distress call.

FUELING

1. Gasoline vapors are explosive. Close all doors, hatches, and ports while fueling. Extinguish galley fires and pilot lights. Smoking is strictly prohibited. Keep the nozzle in contact with the tank to prevent sparks. Portable tanks should be fueled out of the boat. Do not use gasoline stoves, heaters, or lights on board.

2. Do not operate electronic gear (i.e., radios) while fueling.

3. Know your fuel tank capacity.

4. After fueling, ventilate all compartments and check machinery and fuel tank spaces for fumes before starting the motor. Remember, the electrical ignition system could provide the spark to an accumulation of gasoline vapors. Keep fuel lines tight and bilges clean.

UNDERWAY

1. When loading a boat, remember: distribute the load evenly; keep the load low; don't stand up in a small boat; don't overload. Take weather and water conditions into account. If the water is rough, the number of persons to be carried should be reduced.

2. Do not permit persons to ride on parts of the boat not designed for such use, especially bow, seatback, or gunwale.

3. Keep an alert lookout; serious accidents result from failure to use your eyes.

4. Be especially careful when operating in any area where swimmers or divers may be. Divers are easily recognized by the red flag with a white diagonal slash which marks the approximate center of their activities.

5. Watch your wake. You are responsible.

6. Know and obey the Rules of the Road.

7. Always have children and non-swimmers wear personal flotation devices. (It is a good idea to have a whistle attached to each PFD.) Make sure everyone on board knows how to put them on.

8. If you capsize, remember that if the boat continues to float, stay with it. Get in it or on it if you can.

9. Water ski only when you are well clear on all other persons. There should always be two people in the tow boat: one to watch the skier, the other to operate the boat.

10. Be extremely careful of your footing. Falls are one of the chief causes of accidents. Stay seated in small boats.

11. Always instruct one other person on board in handling your boat in case you become disabled or fall overboard.

YOU ARE BACK

1. Notify the person you left your "Float Plan" with that you have returned.

2. Inspect and clean your equipment, and make arrangements for replacements or repairs if needed.

RETRIEVAL

Retrieving your boat is similar to launching and should be done with the same courtesy by reversing the procedures for launching. Unload your boat at the dock and keep it there until the trailer is ready to move down the ramp. Move the boat on to the trailer and secure it. Finally, move the towing vehicle and trailer with boat to the parking area for loading, housekeeping, and other maintenance chores.

STORAGE

Drainage

To prevent water from accumulating in the boat, remove the drain plug and tilt the trailer and the boat enough to allow drainage. This should be done for even short term storage.

When storing the boat on its trailer for any length of time, get the weight off the wheels. Cinder blocks under the tongue and four corners of the frame of the trailer should be adequate support, shimmed up if necessary by boards. Once the trailer frame is jacked up, check to be sure that the boat itself is evenly supported—the frame itself can easily be bent out of its normal shape by excessive jacking at a corner. □

In Nature's Garden

by Elizabeth Murray

The Ox-Eye Daisy

There is an old saying in England that spring has not really arrived until you can put your foot down on a dozen daisies at the same time. The saying refers not to the ox-eye daisy but to the flower that is known simply as "the daisy," *Bellis perennis*, the common little daisy in many an English lawn and one of the best-known of all English wildflowers. It is for this species that the common name was given—a corruption of "day's eye" since this little daisy opens its flower heads with the dawn and closes them tightly at night.

It would be hard to put one's foot down on twelve ox-eye daisies at once at any time of the year. However, it is the "daisy import" from Europe which has prospered most in the United States. Ox-eye daisies grow abundantly throughout the country, slightly less in the most southerly states but frequently elsewhere in great masses, in fields, along roadsides, in waste places and old pastures. It is known here as a weed, perhaps a dubious distinction, although in Gray's manual the description is somewhat tempered with the phrase "a beautiful but pernicious weed."

The plant is too big for twelve flower heads to go into one footprint. It grows up to three feet high with a slender, erect stem, usually branching towards the summit. Flower heads occur singly at the tips of the stems but, as with most members of the daisy family (Compositae or Asteraceae), each flower head contains more than a single flower. There are two kinds of flowers in the family, disk flowers and ray flowers, and they are combined in quite large numbers of either one or both types into flower heads. The ox-eye daisy has both types. The ray flowers are all female and are the white lobes resembling petals around the edge of the flower head. The yellow disk flowers, in this case both male and female, form a compact circle with a depressed center in the middle of the flower head. The scientific name for the ox-eye daisy, *Chrysanthemum leucanthemum*, means literally "gold flower, white flower," an accurate if unimaginative description! Basal leaves are obovate, that is, wider at the tip than at the base, and spatulate, with stalks, and coarsely-toothed



or lobed edges. Further up the flower stem, the leaves become smaller, more finely-toothed and have shorter or no stalks of their own.

Although a lovely sight in the fields, from late spring to late summer, masses of ox-eye daisies in the pasture are not especially welcome to farmers, particularly not if they are grazing dairy cattle. Too many ingested daisy leaves give an undesirable flavor to the milk. Sensitive people may get dermatitis from contact with the plant, and there is an old country story that eating the roots of daisies will stunt growth. Some

European authors have written that the early leaves of many daisies can be used as salad, but there are a great many wild salad greens higher up on my list than the ox-eye daisy!

For the superstitious, it might be mentioned that dreaming of daisies in the spring and summer is said to bring good luck, whereas to do so in the fall and winter is bad news. Also, eating three flower heads after having a tooth pulled may guarantee that you will never have a toothache again. Now there's an insurance that would be worth having! □



Bird of the Month

by Carl "Spike" Knuth

The Yellow-Billed Cuckoo

Everyone is familiar with the cuckoo clock and the make-believe bird that pops out on the hour and half-hour from its little house announcing the time with its "cuckoo-cuckoo" call. Few people realize there are real cuckoos native to the United States. It too has an odd, distinctive call of very unbird-like clucking sounds. The poet Wordsworth wrote, "O Cuckoo! Shall I call thee bird? Or but a wandering voice . . .?" Wordsworth was undoubtedly referring to the European cuckoo, a different species than the North American cuckoo. The European cuckoo has a habit of laying eggs in the nests of other birds like our cowbird. The European cuckoo is more hawk-like in appearance while the American types are more dove-like. Our cuckoos are quite different in size, color and habits.

There are two types of cuckoos in Virginia, the black-billed cuckoo and the yellow-billed cuckoo. A third cuckoo, the mangrove cuckoo, is found around the southern and western coasts of Florida as well as the Florida Keys. The yellow-billed cuckoo is the most common and most widely distributed, being found from coast to coast except in the northern Rockies and northwest Pacific. The black-bill's range is a bit more northerly, extending into the Canadian prairie.

The yellow-billed cuckoo measures up to a foot in length; it is a long, slender bird with a long tail. Its lower mandible is yellow, the basis for its most common name. Some Virginians may know it by the name rain crow. It is thought by some that the cuckoo's call is a prediction of rain. Other local names include storm crow, rain dove, and "kow-kow." Both species are basically a grayish, olive-brown above and white below. The yellow-bill's primary wing feathers are rufous brown. Its tail underside

is almost black with large white feather tip markings appearing as large white spots, while the black-bill has smaller white spots on gray feathers. The black-bill has a fleshy red eye ring.

The yellow-billed cuckoo arrives from its South American wintering grounds from as far south as Argentina. It arrives in late spring, when most trees are already quite dense with foliage. They favor dense wooded tangles along streams or thick, brushy areas surrounded by open fields, especially near fruit orchards. Cuckoos are quite secretive and will fly from the center of one tree directly to the center of another. As with many other shy birds, the only clue to its presence is its call, a series of hollow-sounding clucking notes—almost squirrel-like—presented rapidly at first, then abruptly changing to slower, longer notes running down the scale. You may hear the call in one area, and only moments later, hear it hundreds of yards away. Hence, the wandering voice Wordsworth wrote of. Bass anglers working the wooded shores of Virginia's big reservoirs hear them frequently. Cuckoos are common on Game Commission Wildlife Management Areas as well. Amelia, Powhatan, Hardware River, James River, Elm Hill and White Oak Mountain Wildlife Management Areas all have yellow-billed cuckoos. If you do see them in flight, they'll fly straight and direct, their long tails being very noticeable.

The cuckoo builds a nest up to 25 feet off the ground, a shallow, frail platform-like nest of twigs, grass, leaves and catkins, and lays two to six dull greenish-blue eggs. While our U.S. cuckoos don't lay eggs in other birds' nests, they will occasionally lay eggs in each other's nests. Young cuckoos are black and

featherless at first, with bristles of quill-like feather tubes protruding from their bodies. Ultimately these tubes release fluffy juvenile feathers as the young birds seem to acquire a fully feathered body as if by magic.

Cuckoos are said to be guilty of eating the eggs of other birds. They apparently do so in a non-aggressive manner—probably "stumbling" over the nests by accident because of their habit of climbing through dense foliage where nests are located. Some naturalists claim they are often caught in the act and killed by the offended birds. The naturalist Gladden stated that the cuckoo "gives the impression of being deeply pre-occupied and quite absent-minded as it slides in and out . . . of trees like a ghost. Upon first alighting, he looks about him as if he were dazed . . ." Undoubtedly, this is where the not-so-complimentary saying, "He's cuckoo!" originated.

Cuckoos are very beneficial in that they feed mainly on tent caterpillars. In fact, their numbers increase significantly during tent caterpillar outbreaks. In addition, they'll eat canker worms, webworms, tussock moths and numerous other insects and larvae that are injurious to fruit orchards. Some 28 percent of their diet is made up of caterpillars, especially the hairy types which other birds won't touch. These hairs often mat their stomach linings before being expelled. Other foods include beetles, locusts and dried wild fruits.

I saw my first yellow-billed cuckoo in an apple tree heavily infested with tent caterpillars when I was about eight years old. It was at an old Milwaukee Road train station in what was then the little town of Nashotah, Wisconsin. Since then I've learned to appreciate this unique, interesting and valuable wildlife resource—the wandering voice. □



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